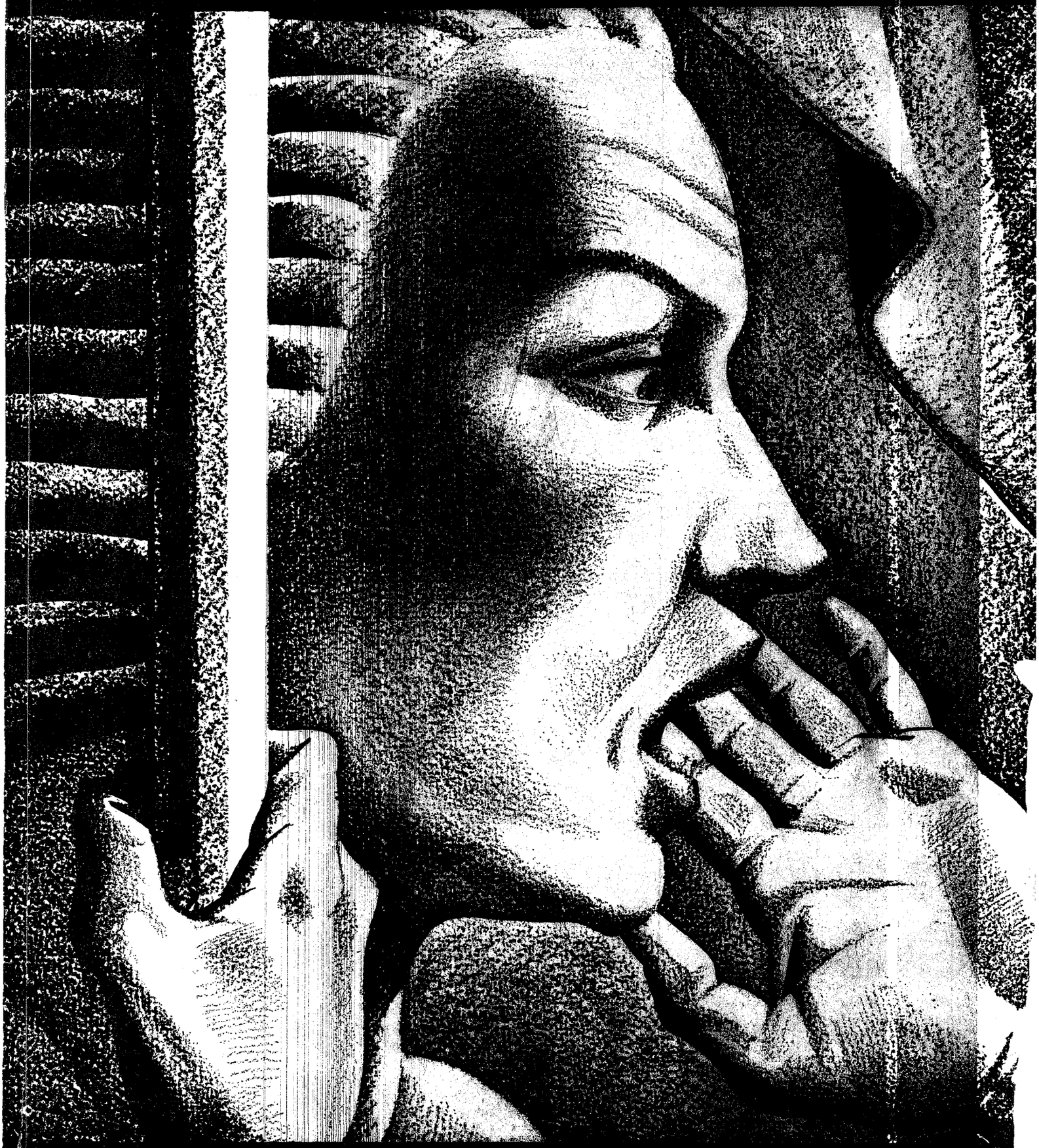
NEW MASSES

SEPTEMBER 15, 1936 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY



R. Palme Dutt Naomi Mitchison Edward [illegible] Jose

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

ROUNDING the bend of summer at full gallop and heading down the homestretch toward the autumnal equinox, ladies and gentlemen, you see before you that dark horse, the new NEW MASSES. If you will stop your cheering for a moment, we will drop our figure

of speech and make a few remarks on some of the innovations.

The pictorial cover, which will continue, seems, apart from its intrinsic attractiveness, to be more in the tradition of American journalism. . . . The deckheads under the titles of articles and stories are planned to give you at a glance the salient point of interest. . . . The weekly news survey is designed to give an integrated picture of the major happenings (and the minor significant ones you don't see in your daily paper) in the march of world events. . . . The "Sights and Sounds" department will be an authoritative, thorough-going guide to movies, plays, the radio, music, art, and the dance. . . . "Review and Comment" will continue to be a trustworthy survey of important books, and will be expanded to include listings of those previously recommended and those currently published but not reviewed in the same issue. . . . Our increased use of art, both serious and satirical, will, we expect, afford a medium of expression to the host of young artists which will place the NEW MASSES on a par with the old *Masses* as a discovery ground for important new talent. . . . And our editorial page will be genuinely polemical, sharpening for use against the enemies of peace, freedom, and progress the formidable two-edged sword of Marxist theory and practice.

Who's Who

NO MORE important article than R. Palme Dutt's "Britain and Spain," we feel, has appeared in our pages for many months. The author of the world-famous *Fascism and Social Revolution* in this piece has taken the pants off the strict-neutrality notion, and has pointed a moral for the British people which can with profit be taken to heart by Americans.

Alexander Kendrick, who penetrates the hocus-pocus of Buchmanism in his article "Savonarola of the Ritz," is a Philadelphia newspaperman who is known to NEW MASSES readers for his coverage of the R.C.A.-Victor strike in Camden. We are told he wrote a magazine article under his own name roasting the paper for which he works. Nice going.

British Naomi Mitchison ranks as one of the outstanding historical novelists of our time, being, up to now, best known for her novelistic revivification of classic Greece. Her first novel in a modern setting, *We Have Been Warned,* has just been published by Vanguard Press.

George Dangerfield, another Britisher, is the author of *The Strange Death of Liberal England.*

Albert Halper, who was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship in creative literature in 1934, is the author of the novels *Union Square,* which was a Literary Guild selection, and *The Foundry,* which is now in production as a movie at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios.

Edward Newhouse, whose previous work for the NEW MASSES is too well known to require comment, will from time to time contribute comment on current motion pictures to our "Sights and Sounds" department. His new novel, *This Is Your Day,* will be published by Lee Furman late this fall.

Anton Refregier is a director of the American Artists' School in New York and was scenic director at the Arts in the Theater school on Triuna Island, Lake George, New York, this summer.

Art Young, the grand young man of American cartooning, was art editor of the old *Masses.*

John Mackey, who has Rockefeller and Mellon under his powerful microscope in this issue, is adding to his reputation as a first-class artist some considerable renown as an outstanding revolutionary naturalist.

Isidor Schneider, our literary editor, is known also for his volume of poems, *Comrade Mister,* and for his recent novel, *From the Kingdom of Necessity.*

Milton Howard, who was for a number of years on the editorial staff of the *Daily Worker* and a contributor to the

Communist, was the author of the brilliant essay on Edmund Wilson's *Travels in Two Democracies* in our issue of September 8.

Next Week or Later

AN impressionistic study of present-day England by Ilya Ehrenbourg. . . . An analysis of the propaganda technique of the Hearst press, by Maxwell Millane. . . . Impressions of the increasing class ferment in Canada, by John Hyde Preston. . . . A short story by a hitherto unpublished author, Jo Sinclair. . . . What Earl Browder's radio fan mail amounted to, in quantity and quality. . . . An article on the vicissitudes in the life of a commission salesman.

Worth Noting

FORTY-EIGHT prominent citizens have signed and forwarded to Governor Merriam of California a petition asking pardons for J. B. McNamara and Matthew A. Schmidt, imprisoned for life on murder convictions in connection with the explosion in the Los Angeles *Times* building in 1910. Among the signers of the petition are Representative Thomas R. Amlie of Wisconsin, Bruce Bliven, editor of the *New Republic,* Oswald Garrison Villard, editor of the *Nation,* John Dewey, Theodore Dreiser, David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, Francis J. Gorman, first vice-president of the United Textile Workers of America, Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, Warden Lewis E. Lawes, Sinclair Lewis, Representative Vito Marcantonio, Senator Gerald P. Nye, Amos Pinchot, Upton Sinclair, and Dr. Mary E. Woolley, president of Mount Holyoke College.

The Friends of NEW MASSES will have an important business meeting on

Monday, September 14, to plan the program for the coming season. It will take place at Steinway Hall, 313 West 57th Street, Room 717, at 8:30 sharp.

Lawrence Simpson, American seaman snatched from the American liner *Manhattan* when she was in Hamburg, and imprisoned for "treason" by the German government for having anti-fascist literature in his possession, still languishes in a Nazi dungeon. The National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, in conjunction with the International Labor Defense, has launched an intensive drive to force the U. S. State Department to take action to obtain his release. Seaman Simpson is 34 years old, a native of Illinois, and a member of the International Seaman's Union.

Flashbacks

SIXTEEN years ago, five New York Socialists, previously expelled from the state legislature, were returned at a special election. Street railway workers in Rome, Milan, Bologna seized the lines they worked (Sept. 18, 1920), swelling the ranks of strikers in control of industry. This week back in 1919, silent, stony-faced I.W.W.'s with hatbands labeled "Release Political Prisoners" lined five blocks of Seattle streets through which President Wilson passed, hoping for an ovation. One hundred and one years ago (Sept. 15, 1835) New York state workers organized the Equal Rights ("Loco Foco") Party, America's second labor party.

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NEW MASSES
SEPTEMBER 15, 1936

Britain and Spain

A keen analysis of the relation of the British ruling-class policy and the British Labor Party to the Spanish civil war

By R. Palme Dutt

IN letters of flame and blood, the issue of the present era is being written for all to read. The murderous war let loose by fascism in Spain, with the open support of the world forces of fascism, confirms once again, even for the most skeptical, the truth of Lenin's dictum that the path of the proletariat also in western Europe lies through "heavy civil war." What the Communist warnings for the two decades since the world war had not yet had time to teach the mass of the workers, fascism *is* teaching. Starting in Germany in 1933 with the Hitler terror (which in three years has slain ten thousand and condemned a quarter of a million human beings to six hundred thousand years' imprisonment or six hundred times the record of Bismarck's twelve-year anti-Socialist repression), through the bloody bombardment of Austria and the Asturias in 1934, through the ceaseless military preparations of fascism and open violation of treaties, through the Italian brigand war on Ethiopia in 1935, to the combined fascist war on the Spanish people in 1936, the fascist war offensive in Europe has advanced in widening waves. Every weakness, every hesitation or division in the popular ranks, only draws on the offensive and prepares the way for its extension. Today all, even the most legalistic democrats, liberals, reformists, progressives, pacifists, are compelled increasingly to recognize the inevitable struggle against an enemy that knows no law and no restraint, and to recognize that all they stand for is bound up with the victory of the armed workers' struggle in Spain. In this battle for life against destruction and barbarism we need to unite all forces in order to secure by every means the victory of the Spanish people. This issue transcends all others today.

"Armed struggle, not of their seeking, has begun and must be carried through." Thus the Labor Party organ, the *Daily Herald,* of July 20, 1936. Seventeen years ago the first manifesto of the Communist International proclaimed:

> Civil war is *forced upon* the laboring classes by their arch-enemies. The working class must answer blow for blow, if it is not to renounce its own object and its own future, which is at the same time the future of all humanity.
>
> The Communist Parties, far from conjuring up civil war artificially, rather strive to shorten its duration as much as possible—in any case it has become an iron necessity—to minimize the number of its victims, and above all to secure victory for the proletariat.

For seventeen years this issue, on which Communism has from the outset spoken the hard truth which all today are beginning to recognize, has been made the basis of attacks by the MacDonalds and Morrisons against Communism as the party of "violence" and of "civil war." Two and a half years ago, in the face of the armed struggles in Austria, when the Socialist and Communist workers fought shoulder to shoulder, the Labor Party organ was compelled to declare on February 14, 1934: "They could do no other. Civil war was forced upon them." And today, in the face of the armed struggles in Spain, when the Socialist and Communist Parties are fighting in a united front, the Labor Party organ is once again compelled to declare: "Armed struggle, not of their seeking, has begun and must be carried through." Who, then, was right or understood better the conditions of western Europe? The Communist International, or the traitor MacDonald and the reformist Morrison? In the burning flames of reality the sophistries shrivel and crumble.

AND YET, despite this situation, when the supreme need is unity of all forces in support of the Spanish struggle, when the united Socialist and Communist workers of Spain are

William Sanderson

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fighting and dying in "armed struggle, not of their seeking," the same official organ of the Labor Party, which proclaims this armed struggle inevitable and calls for its victory, denounces the Communist Party as "a party of violence" (August 13, 1936), and on this ground opposes the same unity in Britain, which is indispensable to transform the international situation and give the necessary aid for victory in Spain. This double bookkeeping would be incredible if it were not true. In one breath it is declared that "armed struggle must be carried through." In the next breath the Communist Party, which is spending itself in the forefront of the common fight to carry it through, is denounced as a party supporting armed struggle. Alternately, the supreme issue of the present struggle in Spain is declared to be the fight for democracy; and in the next breath the Communist Party is derided as "reformist" and "pseudo-liberal" because it puts in the forefront, at the present stage, the fight for democratic rights against fascism, and does not declare the immediate issue to be socialism. In one and the same article Morrison (in *Forward,* August 1) proclaims Hats Off to the People's Front in Spain: "We British Labor people raise our hats to the workers in Spain, men and women; this mighty proletarian army has made a wonderful fight"; and then, amazingly, he proceeds to show that a People's Front must not be realized in Britain: "Still less is it wise to compare Spain and Britain; Spanish conditions are much less like British than French. . . . I still believe and hope that socialism can come to Britain without bloody revolution." (German Social Democracy also entertained this "belief and hope.")

IT IS EVIDENT that here is a glaring contradiction between the burning realities and needs of the international situation, which all are compelled to recognize, and the policy for home consumption, which is still maintained in disastrous opposition to these realities. This contradiction is at the root of the weakness in the international front of the popular forces, which plays into the hands of the fascist offensive. The local narrow sectarian opposition to the united front, derived from the days of MacDonaldism, from the denial of the class struggle or the possibility of armed struggle in the countries of western Europe, is maintained in the face of the object lesson of present facts, and lets down the whole front of struggle. The debit side of the account wipes out the credit side. *It is correct to recognize the urgent importance of the armed struggle of the Spanish people and to call for all support to it. But that support can only be effectively realized if the united front and the People's Front are realized in Britain.* It is the absence of the People's Front in Britain, and the consequent continued dominance of the National government, with its fascist sympathies, that gives a free hand to the fascist Powers to promote fascism in Europe, while strangling the role of the People's Front government in France. This international aspect of the Spanish struggle, and our consequent task, is the most important for us to realize in Britain.

SPAIN IS NOT BRITAIN? So, too, Germany was not Italy, and Austria was not Germany. These truisms of the differences of conditions not only cover blindness to the basic character of the capitalist-class dictatorship in all countries beneath the manifold differences, and above all to the unity of emergency methods to which every privileged class finally resorts when its privileges are threatened. They also cover—and this is more urgently serious for

A. Refregier

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the immediate situation—blindness to the international character of the front of reaction which is built up on the basis of the Spanish struggle. The front of reaction in Spain is not only Spanish, nor only German Nazi and Italian Fascist, but also to a certain degree British. Spain may not be Britain, but there is much in the forces behind the reaction in Spain, and especially in the powerful capitalist interests behind it, that is directly British. And the British ruling class has no such illusions or blindness as to the unity of the struggle. For this it is only necessary to study the British Conservative press, which by its open class solidarity with the Spanish reaction betrays with abundant clearness the intentions of the British ruling class in the event of need in Britain.

Consider for a moment the significance of the language of the strongest individual leader of British Conservatism, Churchill, in connection with Spain:

> It is idle to claim that a constitutional and parliamentary regime is legally or morally entitled to the obedience of all classes, when it is actually being subverted and devoured from day to day by Communism. A constitutional government, to be worthy of the name, must prove itself capable of preserving law and order, and protecting life, freedom, and property: If it fails to enforce these guarantees, no parliamentary system can endure. [From "The Spanish Tragedy," in the *Evening Standard,* August 10, 1936.]

There is no excuse for misunderstanding this language, which is the statement not of a Spanish reactionary, but of a foremost leader of the British ruling class. Parliamentary democracy will be permitted only so long as it maintains the rights of "property," i.e., so long as it maintains capitalism. Once these rights are invaded, legality and constitutionalism go by the board, and "no parliamentary system can endure."

The labor movement will do well to pay heed to this language of the real rulers of Britain, and not to be doped by the assurances of a Morrison that "Spanish conditions are not like British," and that the danger of "violence" comes from communism.

IN THE FACE of this open class consciousness and contempt for democracy on the part of the British ruling class, the organ of the Labor Party leadership can only express its pained surprise:

> That Conservative democrats should be occupying an ambiguous position when the facts in Spain are so crystal-clear was neither expected, nor is it pleasant. [*Daily Herald,* July 30, 1936.]

Not "expected"? To anyone really acquainted with conditions in Britain, and not living in an atmosphere of doped schoolbooks and Baldwin's after-dinner speeches on "democracy," to anyone with any acquaintance with the whole record of the British ruling class on the side of reaction from the Napoleonic wars through the American Civil War, China, India, czarism, and Russian intervention, nothing else was to be expected. The workers' leader in Britain who does not "expect" this, who prefers to dismiss it from his thoughts as not "pleasant," who does not daily calculate on this as the essence of the realities he has to face, is not fit for his post.

"Cheer up, J. B. This union business is merely a fad—like jig-saw puzzles." Ajay

THIS IS NO WAR between two sections of the Spanish people. It is a war of the world forces of reaction and fascism against the Spanish people and its elected government. In order to fight the Spanish people, world reaction has had to draw on foreign mercenaries, the debased victims of poverty and violence from every capitalist country in the globe, and on conscripted Africans, uprooted from their homes and trained only for the purposes of capitalist savagery and barbarism. Against the heroic Spanish people foreign arms, machine guns, and aeroplanes have been poured in from Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, and also—until the working-class opposition and strike threat of the National Aircraft Shop Stewards Council compelled the embargo—from Britain. The financial basis of the rebellion comes equally from abroad. Behind the interventionist war in Spain stand Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, the Catholic church, and the most powerful reactionary sections of finance capital in Britain and the United States. The representatives of international finance capital, not only German and Italian, but also British, French, and American, are gathered in the counter-revolutionary headquarters in Burgos like vultures waiting for their prey.

Without this foreign aid the handful of militarist generals, feudal landowners, and priestly oppressors could not have held out against the Spanish people for a week. This is admitted in the news messages even of the British Conservative pro-fascist press:

> The attitude of the civil population seems to be proving decisive. All over the country they have turned out with rifles, shotguns, pistols, and any other weapons to hand in defence of the government. [London *Times,* July 21, 1936.]

> General Franco, the insurgent leader in the south, dare not weaken his forces to march on Madrid because Andalusia has strong pro-Government sympathies. Similarly in Saragossa the insurgent garrison cannot leave for a march on the capital until they are assured that the townsmen would not immediately join the government. [London *Times,* August 17, 1936.]

This is the situation of an invading army of occupation, not of a country divided by civil war. The tactics adopted by the counter-revolution correspond to this situation; and the methods of holding the occupied areas closely resemble the methods of Italian Fascism in the occupied areas of Ethiopia:

> A typical example of militarist insurgent tactics to date has been the dispatch from headquarters—notably Seville—of detachments, about 100 strong, of Moors or foreign legionaries by motor lorry. On arriving at the outskirts of a dubious village they fire a few rounds from mountain guns, an aeroplane drops some bombs, and they then advance. Unless the resistance is too severe, they scour the village, shoot all suspected persons, and retire to their bases, repeating the process later if necessary. [London *Times,* August 13, 1936.]

And this is in the areas of occupation, presented in the international press as "insurgent" or "anti-government" areas.

It is evident that in this situation the decisive question is the question of foreign supplies. In order not to impede the flow of supplies from international reactionary supporting groups, all pretense of legality has been thrown to the winds. If the workers of western Europe still hold any lingering legalist illusions in the constitutional professions of the ruling class, the example of Spain—the open military coup against a democratically elected majority government, with the unconcealed applause and support of the most powerful capitalist press in the remaining parliamentary-democratic countries—will deal a heavy blow to such illusions, following on and confirming anew the examples of Italy, Germany, Austria, and France, not to mention pre-war Ulster. But with Spain the same process of the contempt of the ruling class

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for all legality, once the issue of the class struggle is at stake, has been demonstrated with merciless precision on the *international* plane. This lesson is of burning importance for the future of the class struggle in Europe.

THERE is no question as to the facts. By international law a recognized legal government has the right to purchase any supplies it requires from countries with which it has relations; while the affording of any supplies to a revolt against that government is an offense against international law, for which heavy damages can be demanded and have been paid in the past (as Britain had to pay compensation for its supplies to the reactionary South in the American Civil War). Yet what has happened? The fascist Powers have poured in supplies, arms, aeroplanes, and personnel to the illegal rebellion in Spain without any protest from the other Powers; while the British government has proclaimed, and thereby compelled the French government to follow a corresponding line (reinforced only by the desperate attempt to secure from the fascist Powers a promise of a similar line), a policy of "neutrality," i.e., "neutrality" between law and illegality. In international law no such "neutrality" is possible. Its practical effect is to deny supplies to the democratic government in Spain, while supplies pour in against it from the fascist Powers. History knows no parallel to such a position. Even in the case of the British supplies to Kolchak and Denikin, Britain had not legally recognized the Soviet government, and the Supreme Council had made a declaration "recognizing" Kolchak as ruler of Russia. Here the illegality is open and unconcealed. It arouses no tremor in the British press, normally so concerned for legal rectitude, if it can be used against the popular side. Thus on the Italian supply of aeroplanes to the Spanish revolt, the *Observer* casually and placidly remarks:

> The fact that Italian aeroplanes have passed over French-African territory on their way to join the rebels in Morocco shows the strong interest the Italians have in a rebel victory. [August 2, 1936.]

"Shows the strong interest." That is all. It would only be necessary to imagine the converse, if arms and aeroplanes were to be poured from the Soviet Union in support of an illegal revolt against a democratically elected government in Europe, to conceive the thunders that would pour from the British press and demands for immediate action. There could be no clearer demonstration that legality has no existence for the bourgeoisie save as a weapon in the class struggle, to be used or discarded according to the interests of the struggle; the class struggle governs all.

TWO FRONTS are facing each other on an international plane in this Spanish struggle. On the one side, the fascist powers act openly, lawlessly, without hesitation, confident that they will be covered by their backers in the other countries. On the other side, the popular forces are still strangled by the lack of a People's Front in Britain; and in consequence the British National government is able to act in practice as the covert ally of Fascism, and to prevent the lawful supplies from the democratic countries to the Spanish People's Government. The view of British official quarters was described as follows by the diplomatic correspondent of the Manchester *Guardian*:

> They fear that arms supplied to the Spanish government might fall into "extremist" hands, and by them it is considered desirable that there shall be as few arms as possible in Spain. [July 31, 1936.]

It is this British line that has driven the French People's Front government to the desperate expedient of endeavoring at any rate to secure a similar embargo on supplies from the fascist Powers. The same journal makes clear that this line was from the outset pressed on the French government by the British government:

> When the Spanish war broke out, the French government was sharply split, not knowing whether or not to let the Spanish government have its full legal rights; *the British government urged "non-intervention"* on it. [August 21, 1936.]

It is thus evident that a key to the whole situation, both to the issue of the struggle in Spain and to the whole international situation, lies in Britain. May the delegates to the Trades Union Congress this month, and to the Labor Party Conference next month, bear in mind this situation, not only for the future in Britain, but for the whole international situation and the heavy consequences that hang on their decisions—the alternatives of a fascist Europe or popular-democratic advance—when they make their decisions on the vital question of unity. We must support the Spanish struggle by every means in our power. This is agreed by all. We must send all the material support we are able. This is agreed by all. But the greatest support of all we can give is the establishment of working-class unity and the People's Front in our own country.

Ancestors

Childbirth, one woman said, might be
the thing daydreamers dream of,
twanging the long nerve between brain and loins,
the orgasm prolonged to hours,
the body, quaking all its length, the pulses
huge and long, issuing the prodigious seed.

The child the prodigious seed! The thought
stayed with me. How many beings
burgeon from that seed. Linnæus of souls,
counting, could number, in a single life,
a majority of the species,
but especially rich in the lower orders,
thriving in the capitalist miasma:

The thief, the liar, the coward, the egomaniac,
the bully and the meek, the prodigal, the miser,
the ascetic, the glutton, the peeper, the prude,
the boaster and the shader of his light,
the stubborn and the sandy-willed,
the climber and the stander-still,
the gloaters and the self-forbidders,
the sprawlers and the tuckers-in,
the too enduring and the patienceless,
the shrinkers and the thickeners of crowds,
the light of mind and those with over-running brains,
the speeders and the late, the tight, the loose,
the yesmen and the scorning all,
the pryers and the hiders, the hard, the soft,
the slave bowed and the master arched—

I have them all within myself.
I curse them, starve them how I can.
If I could disown them, willingly I would cut
doors in my flesh to cast them out.

One thing I can. I know their ancestors.
I know the fathers of my fears,
the sires of my suspicions.
Heavy and loathsome they have grown
on surfeit and injustices,
poxed ears that have devoured the wholesome,
capitalist pillagers, capitalist anarchs.

Lest they father on my children too
cowards, betrayers, long-sufferers, dolts,
I espouse the revolution, I put to it,
put to its courage, its wisdom, its will,
all that is left fertile in me, to father
new Bolshevik being.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

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Savonarola of the Ritz

Frank N. D. Buchman substituted phony psychoanalysis for a baseball bat and went out after upper-class souls. He and his disciples are listened to reverently in the parlors of the "best people." They are taken seriously by the press. They are, as they themselves are first to tell you, a "force"

By Alexander Kendrick

THIRTY YEARS AGO, Frank N. D. Buchman, a young Lutheran minister, ran a soul-saving depot in the old Gallows Hill section of Philadelphia's broad slums. Doughnuts and coffee were a major item on his ecclesiastical agenda.

Today, while the shade of Billy Sunday groans enviously, Buchman and his traveling troupe of twinkling theologians put on their wrestling bout with Original Sin in the first-class salon of the *Queen Mary*, in the brocaded halls of the Biltmore and the Ritz, and in the private grounds of vast country estates. The doughnuts and coffee have become high tea, in the English manner.

Obviously, progress has been made. Buchman and his crew are sleek and well-fed. They are heard reverently by the "best people." They attribute to themselves a spiritual revolution which, they modestly say, will turn the world into a perpetual love-feast. They get themselves taken seriously in the press, apparently converting city editors with as much ease as retired major-generals. They win endorsements from the master minds of the League of Nations. They are, they themselves will be the first to tell you, a *force*.

Despite his present gilt and trappings, Frank Nathan Daniel Buchman has essentially the same concepts he had thirty years ago. He has substituted a fake kind of psychoanalysis for a baseball bat in his battle with Satan. He draws a bigger and better gate. But saving souls in Gallows Hill and saving souls in the ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria are, after all, not exactly unrelated.

There is, however, a highly important and decisive difference between Buchman's humble little mission house of 1905 and the luxurious Buchmanism of today. In the interval fascism has been nurtured by the nations of the world. Thereby hangs a tale.

BUCHMANISM appeals to what Redfield calls the "ruling clawss." Its flame draws big fluttering moths—the previously mentioned retired major-generals, soul-hungry politicians, world-weary college students, chamber-of-commerce satraps, professors, authors, weighed-under members of the House of Lords, admirals, publishers, real estate magnates, baronesses of the French Republic, and bankers.

Aline Fruhauf

"Human problems aren't economic. They are moral, and they can't be solved by immoral measures. . . . Think what it would mean to the world if Hitler surrendered to the control of God. Or Mussolini. Or any dictator. . . . Spain has taught us what Communism will bring. . . . I thank heaven for a man like Adolf Hitler, who built a front line of defense against the anti-Christ of Communism." —*Frank N. D. Buchman, as quoted in the New York World-Telegram, August 26, 1936.*

They are told that the world is in great moral and spiritual travail, as it undoubtedly is; and the only thing that can save it is God; and the only method is individual regeneration. The technical phrase is *life changing*.

The celestial mechanics are simple. The first step is confession, the second restitution, and the sacred third is achievement of "God-guidance." That is when God speaks to you in your "quiet time" and you jot down instructions in the little notebook good Buchmanites always carry. Dr. Buchman's dream is to have a "spiritual radiophone" in every home, through which God may make known his wants.

"God-guidance," Buchman explains, "supplies the answer to every problem, whether personal, social, economic, or political."

The confession portion of the ritual is subordinate to the actual "life changing" which is supposed to follow. But so unregenerate are the world's sinners that confession seems to be the part they like best.

Hence the famous Buchmanite "house parties" at which groping souls, in an atmosphere of back-slaps and hand-clasps, rise and pour out harrowing accounts of their peccadilloes. This is called "sharing," and when it begins there are very few vacant seats.

This summer's oratorical orgy at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, was a ten-day "house party." The "best people" came from all parts of the United States to hear the Buchmanite Follies from the lips of the good doctor's crack "life changing" team. The "house parties" have always been selective, and this was no exception. The big event of the revival was the coming of Mrs. Henry Ford, in her private railroad car.

THE REGULAR PROGRAM was followed at Stockbridge. Lead-off man was Lord John Addington, who, by the ascetic rules of the order, is known simply as John. He is a squat person with a bald head and fantastic mustache, and he gave his usual testimony, which is as follows:

"I sit in the House of Lords. I have been a church worker all my life. I found in this fellowship a power which has broken down in me those barriers and prejudices of race, class, party, creed, and nationality to which I am particularly prone." Then, magnificently: "Although a conservative aristocrat, I am proud to stand on the same platform with a Dutch Socialist, and to share a cabin with him on the boat."

The Dutch Socialist was right there to pick up the cue. He is Dr. J. E. W. Duys, who sits in the Parliament of Amsterdam. He declared that the Buchmanites have "found the answer to all the problems that we politicians are facing. The Oxford Group has nothing to do with politics and yet has everything to do with it." As a parting shot he added: "Before the movement, I loved only pretty girls. Now I love you all."

Baron Eugen von Teuber, who deserted Vienna for Los Angeles, reported that he was embarrassed when his life was changed, and he had to face his "cocktail drinking crowd." He came through, however, and now believes that Buchmanism will lead to the

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solution of unemployment, and also "the relief of business men from the fear of another depression."

Bernard Hallware, Montreal newspaper publisher, confessed his changed life so worked on him that he refunded a "check in four figures" to the customs service which, in some unexplained manner, he had apparently bilked.

Brigadier General Erle D. Luce (retired) of Minneapolis, testified he was cured of drinking by Buchmanism. The good Dr. Buchman himself, hovering on the platform, came forward and said: "Suppose we bow our heads after that. It's a miracle."

Baroness de Watteville Berckheim testified that Buchmanism has given her "real fellowship" with her servants, so that "we are ready to witness in a Communist town [Paris] that class problems no longer exist."

Sir Philip Dundas, Scotch conservative, revealed that Buchmanism had broken down "the barrier of class between me and the working classes."

Devar Surya Sena, who comes from horribly exploited Ceylon, testified: "I resented being considered a subject race . . . but now I have discovered that my exalted ego was my worst enemy, and not the English."

The curtain act in this spiritual vaudeville were Leo Minton and Billy Duval, song-and-dance team. They testified that their lives had been changed some time back, and that now they hoped to write "music to articulate the new spiritual revolution."

So it went, the day's run of "sharing" at Stockbridge. Above the confessional a plane flew, trailing a cheese-cloth sign reading, "America, Awake!" The Stockbridge meetings were held in an open-air auditorium and in the town hall, and were reached through avenues of massed flags, representing the nations where Buchmanism has "conquered." *Very conspicuous was the swastika emblem of Nazi Germany.*

After the meetings broke up, and the camp-meeting followers wandered off to golf courses, tennis courts, or the hotel bar, they were trailed by members of the Buchman "life changing" team, conversation was struck up, gentle persuasion was put into play, and the next day there were new converts.

Billy Sunday, thou shouldst be living at this hour!

Away from the cloying influence of the Buchman house party, and in the harsh light of day, how does this pious palaver work out?

IN THIS account I have deliberately refrained from calling them the Oxford Group. They have nothing to do either with Oxford or the Oxford Movement, and have simply usurped the name.

The Buchmanites boast that their system actually works. In June 1934 at Banff (the Buchmanites always pick the nicest places for their gatherings) a manifesto was issued by the Buchmanites declaring that they had "partially settled" the Pacific Coast dock strike by a "mass attack of prayer" upon both sides. Since the strike at the time was nowhere near settlement, and two months later developed into the San Francisco general strike, a little investigation here may throw light on the realities of Buchmanism.

It will be recalled how the Coast ship owners tried to break the growing maritime unions, and how both the N.R.A. and Federal intervention efforts failed. Wages and hiring halls were the issues.

On this troubled scene the Buchmanites appeared in Seattle. They held a meeting or two and vanished as they had come. A short while later, from their cool mountain retreat at Banff, came the manifesto, proclaiming that the strike was over, that this was the first time in history Christ was called on to act as a labor arbitrator, and that he had settled things to everybody's satisfaction. "Strikes and lockouts have no place in a Christian world," this remarkable document begins. "There was no need for this strike. Its cause would never have arisen if God's guidance had been sought when the first dark cloud of difference appeared."

In spite of the efforts of the self-styled "stenographers of God," however, the strike went on. Pressed for more information, Buchman himself declares: "We saved the companies $10,000,000 by settling this strike."

"What did the strikers get?" he was asked.

"They must have been satisfied; they returned to work," he answered.

A SALIENT characteristic of the Buchmanites when questioned, particularly about their social and economic beliefs, is to shut up like clams, or gently to bemoan their questioner's "skepticism," telling him politely but firmly that he is still in the grip of sin.

They have no definite program, except "surrender to God." But obviously, even into such sheltered mental cloisters, the world must sometimes rudely intrude. In his expansive moments, Buchman has from time to time dropped hints and statements which form themselves into a fairly consistent and definite pattern, but not until recently did he place his movement squarely in the camp of reaction.

"We're not interested in economics as such," he says. "We believe that almost any economic system will work, if the men who work it are filled with the spirit of Christ. That is why we do not attack capitalism. The abuses of capitalism are not to be found in the system, but in the hearts of men. It is the men we must change, not the system."

This was all very well until the present economic crisis grew deeper and finally sucked even the Buchmanites into the social and political world about them. When that occurred, the high priest of the cult lost no time in running up his fascist colors. In an interview with a New York *World-Telegram* staff writer on August 26, Buchman carried out his teachings to their logical conclusion. Until then he had contented himself with the remark that political leadership "can come only from men and women who speak with authority." Now he developed his theme. "Human problems," he told the Scripps-Howard reporter, "aren't economic. They're moral, and they can't be solved by immoral measures. . . . Think what it would mean to the world if Hitler surrendered to the control of God. Or Mussolini. Or any dictator. Through such a man God could control a nation overnight and solve every last, bewildering problem."

And what does Mr. Buchman mean by "immoral measures"? Communism. And what does "communism"

Pearl Binder

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Thrinacia

"Yet you have a chance of surviving . . . if you and your followers can master your greed in the island of Thrinacia."—*Odyssey*, Book XI.

The fields with wind, as water running clear,
Give the whole world the illusion of waves,
And create an image of the lost Ulysses.
That night, lying in bed, I felt the sea:
It was a cloudy night with showers of rain;
The night receded from the window-panes
Only to come back in each outburst of rain,
Twisting and turning, snapping at shingles and boards,
And I thought of Ulysses come to the dead
Who swarmed about him as the air grew cold.

He held them off with his sword lest they drink the blood,
And he could smell the stench of the death-mold
From out their gasping mouths. He swore and cut
The air, but they looked at him with pathetic eyes,
And no one spoke. They lifted their arms toward him,
Pleading, and he hit them with the flat of his sword
That made a limp sound like the impotent thud
Of a stick on a sack of flour. Their gloating stare,
Their nose-holes sucking in the stinking air,
Their yellow cheeks and green cadaverous necks,
The grave-dirt hanging in their matted hair,
The fungus on their bellies made him swear:
"Keep off! Drink your own piss! Stand!"

Then an odd voice called: "I am Tiresias."
He let the shade draw near to drink the blood.
The tit-man sipped, then gave a sheepish grin
And said: "The future has not happened yet;
Prophecy is cheap now, like a wishful dream;
I and the Sibyl's leaves can only show
That what is certain is when midnights go
A feint of morning follows, then the sun;
That the tireless tides are certain, that death is certain,
That death is really the only absolute!"

He started to simper and his death-dried lips
Cracked open when he smiled. "Tell me my way!"
Ulysses cried, and then the toothless mouth
Grimaced into a grin. "Tell me my way!
The way of me and my men!" He cried "Our way!"

"Westward," the ghost said, pointing toward the west,
"A known land where your lives will be hard,
Deep-grooved, aligned, and mostly without choice;
Your one choice being to control your greed."

The fields with wind, as water running clear,
And the whole sky devoid of every star,
And all night long the voyage to the dead.
And I awake all night watching the road,
Not once cut by the light of any car,
Felt the night recede from the window-panes,
Twisting and turning, snapping at shingles and boards,
Until the daylight fell across my bed.

J. V. HEALY.

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mean in the warped mind of the Buchman *Fuehrer?* "Spain," he answers, "has taught us what Communism will bring. Who would have dreamed that nuns would be running naked in the streets?" Then, in a burst of fervor, "I thank heaven for a man like Adolf Hitler, who built a front line of defense against the anti-Christ of Communism."

DESPITE their grandiose claims, the Buchmanites are far from being the world force they profess to be. The First Century Christian Fellowship, to give it its original name, is a most unusual organization. It has no idea of its own membership, or its own strength—or shall we say, weakness? Its disciples fervently declare they are sweeping the world, yet when they speak in England, it is always in South Africa or Canada that they are strongest; when they speak in America, it is always in England that they are strongest. Their geography is as suspicious as their economics.

It cannot be said, moreover, that they make up in quality what they lack in quantity. We have seen what sort of people are hypnotized by this metaphysical mesmerism. They are the sort of people who perceive that the world and society are indeed ailing. Dimly they realize that there must be fundamental change. Yet such change would affect them first of all, for they are the "ruling clawss." This is their compromise—an escape from the responsibility of facing social and economic realities. Instinctively, it is an escape into a mysticism that leads to fascism.

TOLERANCE would perhaps lead one to say that if Buchmanism is a part of the social and political movement called fascism it is so unconsciously, because its preceptors are economic illiterates, or because they are sincere men whose conceptions are limited.

This would be kind, but unfortunately it would not be true. How, for instance, is Buchmanism financed? Who pays for private railroad cars, and bridal suites on ocean liners, and maintenance at the Biltmores and Ritzes of the world? Who pays for the dress-suit mumbo-jumbo? Why is Mrs. Ford's visit to Stockbridge like the second coming of the Messiah? Why did the "life changing" team glow all over, when news was received of the possible (but, alas, unrealized) appearance of Harvey Firestone? Why is Russell Firestone, known to the Buchmanites as "Bud," one of the most cherished brethren?

These questions answer themselves, but you will get no answer from Buchman. "Where God guides, He provides," is his invariable reply.

There is the anecdote of the group of Buchmanites traveling second class across the ocean, who were called in and given a most castigating lecture by Buchman, traveling first class. They were ordered to change their accommodations, in order to make "good contacts" on board. It is Buchman's philosophy to reach "key people," and through them to filter the salvation influence to the masses. He worships names and titles, and appreciates the directness of the military mind.

This round-faced, smooth, and shampooed apostle of the New Jerusalem has come a long way from the Gallows Hill days, when he preached to chauffeurs and servant-girls and conceived the idea of preaching to their masters, too. His picture has been turned to the wall by the modest Lutheran Ministerium into which he was born and in which he took orders.

It takes no profound insight to see that Buchman and his merry men are not exactly exploring virgin soil. After all, Germany and Italy have already been "God-changed."

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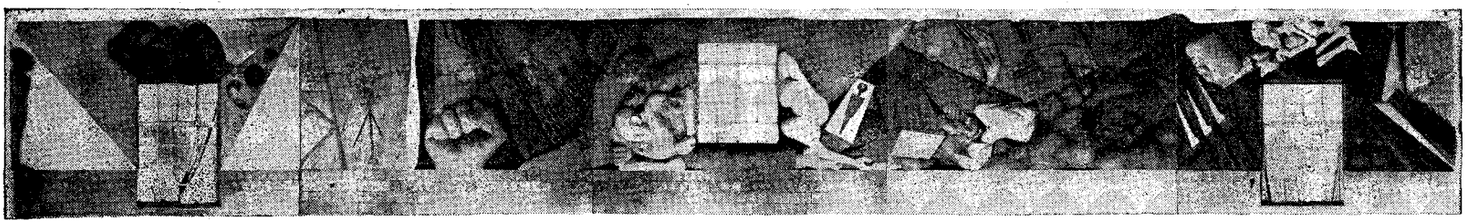
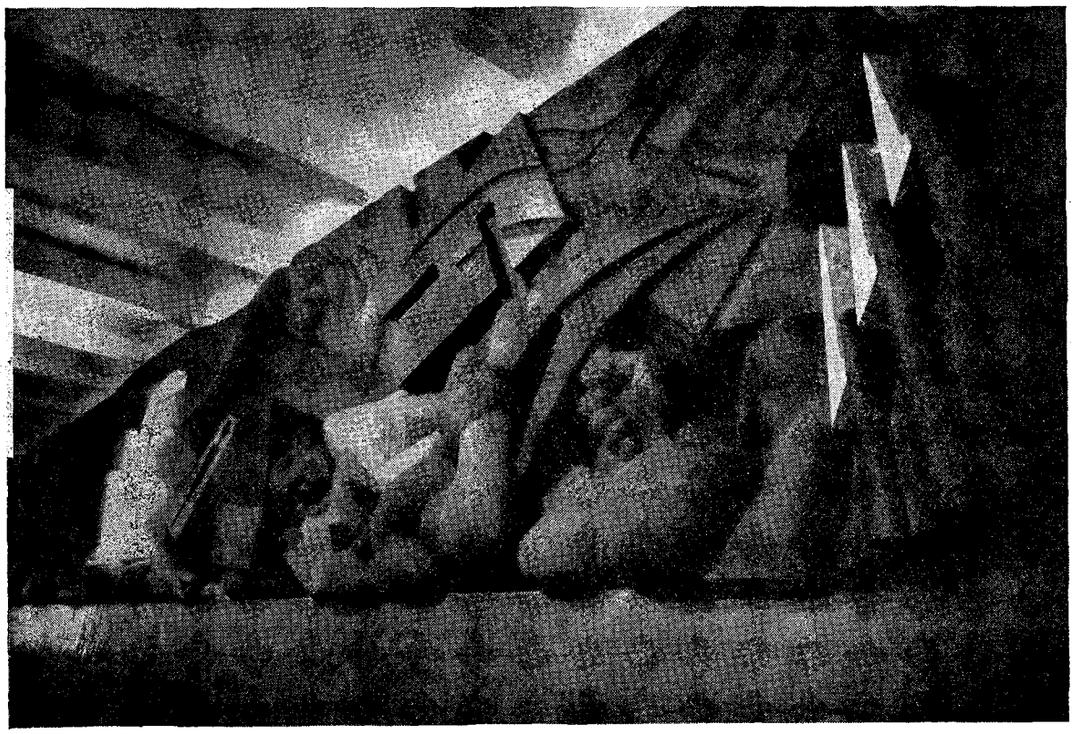
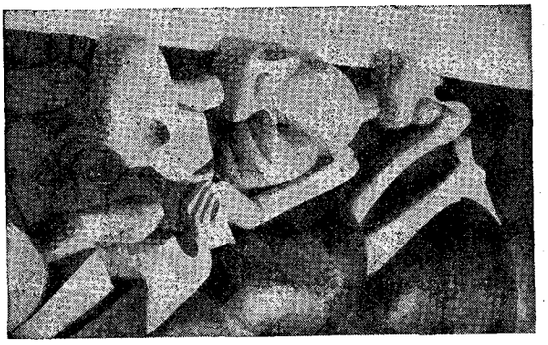




Cement

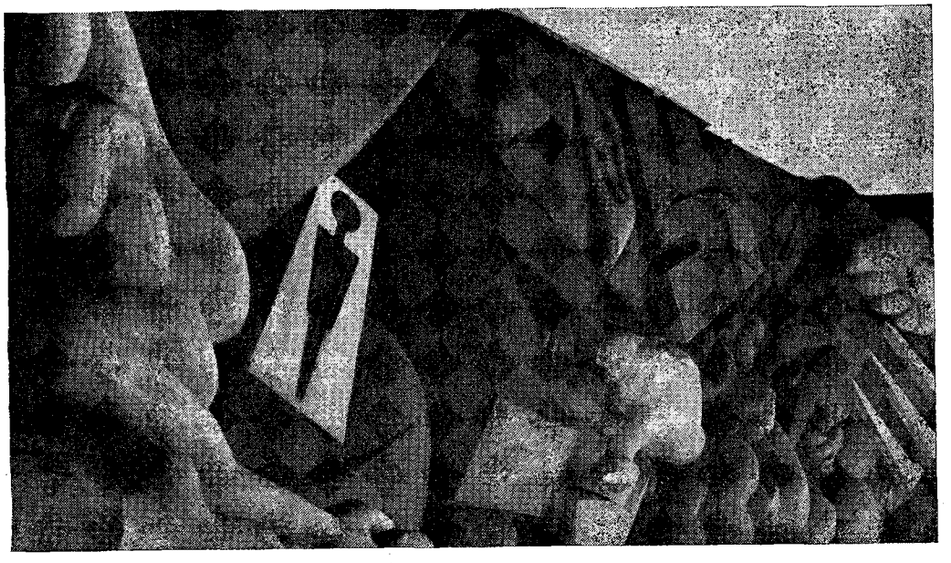
Noguchi's polychrome relief achieves a powerful effect



ISAMU NOGUCHI'S sculptured wall in Mexico City's Mercado Rodriquez is perhaps the most striking thing in that unique market place. The entire area (22 meters by 2.2 meters) is done in colored cement, built up in high relief. The photograph of the artist standing below the clenched fist gives an idea of its size.

The top strip shows the complete wall. It portrays, in Mr. Noguchi's words, "history as seen from Mexico City in 1936."

"Now," says Mr. Noguchi, "our 'now' includes not only the present with the residue of the past, but the future lived already in our minds. Hope here is reality in another place, and if not in another place then in another time. No one country can any longer be historically dealt with except as an integral part of our ever more aware world. Capitalism everywhere struggles with inevitable death—all the machinery of war, coercion, and bigotry are as smoke from that fire. Labor awakens with the red flag. And youth, through education, will see the world creatively more abundant, with equal opportunity for all."



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CONNING THE NEWS

"Non-Political" Politics, "Characteristic of Mr. Green," Second Wind in Spain

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S five-thousand-mile "non-political" tour of the drought area was climaxed Sunday night by one of his most politically astute "fireside chats." The entire "journey of husbandry," as the President termed his trip, was a masterly performance from a political standpoint. It kept Roosevelt constantly in the spotlight before officially even beginning his campaign for reëlection, and it completely dwarfed the feeble antics of Landon and Knox. The drought conference with Landon, one of a series of such discussions, by its very nature placed the Republican candidate in a subordinate position and allowed him no chance but to accept with good grace.

If Sunday's speech may be taken as a measure of the concrete accomplishments of the tour, however, it offers little hope to the drought-stricken farmers. The President promised continued work relief at a "decent wage." The work he suggested, including chiefly road-building and erosion projects, is not work to which farmers are adapted, and no attempt was made to determine what constitutes a decent wage. Nor was anything said about the urgent question of the refinancing of farmers' debts or the loans which are needed to keep farmers on their property, and for which work relief wages are far from affording a substitute.

One effect of the drought which made itself strongly felt during the week in New York State was the threat of a milk strike for higher prices—the last resort of farmers made desperate by the burning of their pasture lands and the rising cost of feed for their cattle. In face of the impending strike, leading distributors jacked up the price to the farmer an additional 17 cents. This increase, however, they not only passed along to the consumer by raising the price of milk one cent a quart, but garnered an additional five cents a hundred pounds in the process. Inquired the New York *Post:* "Are the distributors going to take themselves a new profit on the drought, as they did on the drought of 1934?"

Except for a Labor Day proclamation, in which he reiterated the stand on unionism taken in his acceptance speech (indirectly a defense of the company union), Governor Landon made no contribution during the week to his presidential campaign. The outstanding effort on his behalf was the series of speeches which occupied Knox throughout the week. At Waterbury, Conn., he made what the New York *Herald Tribune* termed "a bid for labor support" by announcing that labor should be left to work out its own problems, because "our economic machine is controlled by the automatic sway of competitive forces, guided by the good sense and energy and ambition of three million employers, seven million farmers, a half-million corporation managements, and fifty million workers." It is "preposterous," he said, for the federal government to attempt to substitute itself for this "combined wisdom."

In a subsequent effort Knox asked the question: "What happened to Russian labor when it established a new system that it thought would give labor all the product of enterprise?" No answer was forthcoming either from his hearers or from the Colonel, so the point of the question remains a minor mystery. Coming closer to home, Knox urged labor to keep out of politics, and to "fight its own battles." To which the American Labor Party replied: "Apparently he considers it perfectly proper for organized greed as represented by the Liberty League, the Manufacturers' Association, chambers of commerce, and others on the side of Governor Landon and Colonel Knox to be neck-deep in politics. Colonel Knox all but tells labor not to vote."

WHILE the candidates of the two old parties continued to shadow-box, Communist candidate Earl Browder followed a schedule of speeches clearly outlining the major issues of the campaign. Typical was the address Browder made at his home town of Wichita, Kan., in which he pointed out how the Hearst-Landon alliance made it imperative to defeat the Republicans if we are to keep out of war. "The war-makers," he declared, "led by the reactionary Hearst, are attempting to drive America into a Hitler-Mussolini alliance, thus placing America on the side of the world-wide reaction."

The Communist Party was heartened by the formation of a Committee of Professional Groups for Browder and Ford. The announcement of this committee, signed by Rockwell Kent as chairman, calls on professional and intellectual workers to support the Communist candidates as an "effective movement against reaction, fascism, and war."

Roosevelt's political sagacity, however, continues to attract liberals of varying shades to his banner. Latest recruit is Mayor La Guardia of New York, who on Tuesday committed himself to Roosevelt by signing a call for a conference of progressives to be held in Chicago this week. New York's American Labor Party, affiliated with Labor's Non-Partisan League, ended its first month's activities on behalf of Roosevelt and Lehman with a paid-up enrolment of labor organizations totaling more than 300,000 in membership. And on the Pacific Coast the Washington Commonwealth Federation is reported by the New York *Times* as "rounding up virtually all the left-wing and discontented elements except the Communists" in support of Roosevelt and "against the Lemke-Coughlin-Smith combination."

Erica Volsung

John L. Lewis

Apparently Coughlin has more to worry him at the moment than the W.C.F. It becomes increasingly difficult for him to deny that the Vatican has come to regard him as a first-degree nuisance. The other day the quasi-official Vatican organ *Osservatore Romano* termed "improper" Coughlin's use of the epithet "liar" in connection with President Roosevelt. The paper also stated that press dispatches quoting Bishop Gallagher as saying, "The Holy See fully approved Father Coughlin's activities" did not "correspond with the truth." Nevertheless Bishop Gallagher repeated, on arriving in New York, that the Vatican had in no way criticized Coughlin. Belittling his own mild rebuke to the Detroit priest, made just before he sailed, Gallagher said, "We must show respect to the President. . . . It may look as if the President is telling lies, but we don't tell him he is a liar." The Bishop merely smiled, however, when Coughlin described the election as a choice between "carbolic acid and rat poison." Bishop Gallagher denounced the People's Front of Spain, favored the fascist cause, criticized Roosevelt for having shaken "Litvinov's bloody hand," and wound up by telling the crowd at the pier: "I am happy to see this proof of loyalty to your leader. . . . It's the voice of God that comes to you from this great orator of Royal Oak."

OVERSHADOWING political developments of the week was the suspension of ten international unions from membership in the American Federation of Labor. Along with the expulsion of these unions for affiliation with the Committee for Industrial Organization, went fully one-third of the A.F. of L. membership. By failing to withdraw from the C.I.O. in accordance with the executive council's ultimatum, William Green argued, the C.I.O. unions automatically "withdrew" their affiliation with the A.F. of L. David Dubinsky, of the International Ladies Garment

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Workers' Union, who had resigned earlier in the week from the executive council, characterized Green's statement as "thoroughly inaccurate" and "a distortion of the facts." The C.I.O. unions, he contended, along with all the progressive labor leaders, were "illegally suspended." John L. Lewis, chairman of the C.I.O., had nothing to say beyond the remark: "That's characteristic of Mr. Green."

William Z. Foster, who led the 1919 drive to organize steel, pledged full support to the C.I.O. drive, which is making rapid headway. The chief advance of the week came with the affiliation of the National Council of Gas & Coke Workers to the C.I.O.'s United Mine Workers. The C.I.O. continues to draw remarkable support from labor councils and draft unions throughout the country. To date, the Executive Council's stand has been protested by three international unions, fourteen federations of labor, and forty central labor unions.

ON THE WHOLE, however, reaction during the week kept pace with progress. In Michigan, while the state proceeded slowly and with little ardor to press the trials of the twelve indicted Black Legionnaires, the real powers behind the movement, apparently, were left untouched. Said Lyle D. Tabor, a Pontiac attorney and head of the citizens' committee that demanded the Grand Jury investigation of the Legion last June: "Any one who presumes that the Legion has been smashed is deluding himself. Still 500 strong [in Pontiac] and under new leadership, the Legion is working quietly and effectively to nominate its slate of county officers in the fall primaries." Meanwhile, in Oakland County more than fifty public officials actually named as members of the Black Legion by the Grand Jury still retain office despite demands of citizens' committees.

In New York State the Ku-Klux Klan emerged for the first time since 1931, advertising its call to members and promising a series of meetings. In the same state the United Spanish War Veterans met and passed such vicious resolutions as one to expel 10,000,000 aliens from the United States to relieve unemployment. Washington contributed its bit by refusing to take action on the plea of the Civil Liberties Union to admit to this country Willie Gallacher, Communist member of Britain's Parliament. And Doubleday, Doran, publishers of *It Can't Happen Here,* on whose board of directors sits Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., added a nice little touch by advertising that anti-fascist book as follows: "Sinclair Lewis' powerful novel makes revolution seem a frightful possibility for America. Read it before you vote!"

The week saw a sound drubbing, however, administered to America's arch-reactionary, William Randolph Hearst. The long strike on his *Wisconsin News* in Milwaukee came to an end with the publisher agreeing to a five-day, forty-hour week, wage increases, recognition of the principle of collective bargaining, and reinstatement of the thirteen strikers

Boysen

who had stuck it out for months on the picket line. Capitulation came after the *News* had dropped 50 percent in circulation, and was induced in part by the astounding support given by Seattle labor to the strike called three weeks ago against the Hearst paper of that city. The Seattle journal is still not publishing, and a citizens' committee has been formed to fight the vigilante group of employers who threaten to use force to smash the strike.

Aside from Seattle, the most significant strike situation of the week is the walkout of flour workers in Minneapolis. The huge Pillsbury Flour Mill closed down when 1800 workers struck for better wages and union recognition, and other flour mills are expected to go through the same experience in the next few days.

On the educational front, Harvard showed the way during the week with a tercentenary celebration that took the form of a brain circus. Savants gathered from far countries to calculate horn angles, play games with numbers, and figure out—to the last nuclear unit—the number of elementary electrical particles in the universe. Yale, not to be entirely done out of front-page publicity, announced that henceforth its football games—all strictly amateur, of course—would be broadcast through the courtesy of the Atlantic Refining Company, "makers of White Flash Gasoline." The university will draw $20,000 for six games. Other schools were quick to follow the Yale lead, outstanding being Michigan, whose sons hereafter will hit the line for Kellogg's Corn Flakes.

ACROSS the Atlantic Spain prepares for swifter suppression of the fascist revolt. To this end a new People's Front government, headed by Largo Caballero, was installed. The composition of the former ministry, exclusively Left Republican, had limited its effectiveness in the conduct of the civil war. Six Socialists, two Communists, two Left Republicans, a Republican Unionist, and a member of the Catalan Left form the new cabinet. His government, says Premier Largo Caballero, "considers itself directly representative of all the political forces fighting on various fronts for the preservation of the democratic republic." While not in the cabinet, Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists are backing the new government.

Anticipating Rightist charges of Socialist dictatorship, Caballero defined the government's program as anti-fascist, and "based entirely upon a firm intention to hasten the triumph over the rebellion by coördinating the strength of the people in united action."

Expectations that the cabinet change would have an invigorating effect on the loyalist forces were confirmed when General Franco's personal guard of Moors and Foreign Legionnaires, his shock detachment for the advance from the south on Toledo and Madrid, were beaten in an initial encounter at Talavera. Though superior armament and greater numbers gave the fascists the advantage in their drive to recapture San Sebastian, news from all other fronts augured well for the government.

The defeat of Irun's Loyalist defenders by troops armed by foreign fascists found the Blum government in France hard pressed to justify its policy of banning supplies to the Spanish government. There was the fact, admitted by Rome, that seven days after Mussolini's agreement to the French non-intervention plan, Italian ships had unloaded twenty-four planes of Italian manufacture at Vigo, Spain, for the use of the anti-government forces. The consignment, it was explained, had been ordered prior to Italy's non-intervention pledge. Charges from Lisbon that the Salazar dictatorship has made Portugal a supply base for the Spanish insurgents have not been denied. But Blum, in replying to the Communist demand that the blockade on Spanish democracy be lifted, protested that France is bound to strict observance of the non-intervention agreement. Two hundred thousand Paris metal workers censured Blum's policy with a one-hour strike marked by the slogan: "Airplanes for Spain!"

WHILE international tension surrounding the Spanish crisis continued dominant, significant realignments were in progress on the Continent. General Rydz-Smigly, chief of the Polish General Staff, returned to Warsaw from Paris with a pledge of renewed Franco-Polish military coöperation and promise of a generous allowance in trade credits. The rapprochement was hastened by ill-concealed Nazi designs upon the Corridor, Poland's only gateway to the sea, and by the effect of Hitler's recent conscription decree upon France and Poland. It tends to offset Hitler's gains in Central Europe, which included entrance of the Rumanian government into the orbit of Nazi diplomacy.

With the world in suspense over the Spanish crisis, Mussolini explained fascist foreign policy for the benefit of the unenlightened, saying "we reject the absurdity of eternal peace which is foreign to our creed and temperament." Meanwhile, in Brussels, 6000 delegates from peace organizations throughout the world gathered under the sponsorship of Lord Cecil and French Air Minister Pierre Cot in the World Peace Congress. Placing its reliance upon the peace action of the world's peoples, the Congress resolved to organize a Universal Peace Day; to create a World Peace Badge for all peace advocates; to arrange international visits of prominent peace leaders, and to organize national peace congresses in every country.

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The Cadillac from Wisconsin

A short story from the author of "You Can't Sleep Here," whose work is attracting steadily increasing attention

By Edward Newhouse

AFTER Tony finished repairing the tractor he came into the house and we both put our good suits on. Steve Akosy was supposed to call for us in his truck, but he didn't. We waited till half past eight, then we rolled up our trousers and began tramping through the fields. For all that mud around, we might as well have kept our overalls. Tony's good suit was too small on him anyway. We came into Andy's Skating Rink looking like a couple of chumps, and it was lucky for Steve he had a good excuse about the truck. Not that the other guys were any cleaner. Compared to the girls we all looked a sight. The girls wore mail-order gingham and federal-relief calico, but in some way of their own they had kept from being muddy or crumpled. When we finally joined them inside the rink they looked very fine standing together, and the table they had set looked very appetizing. They had all brought cakes of one sort or another. One of these cakes was a large, five-layer thing full of pecans and a soft, rich, coffee cream.

Andy's was a good place for a social. Besides the bar, he had a bowling alley and indoor horseshoes. In front there was the state road and on both sides he had some dog kennels. Behind his garage there was an orchard and behind that thick woods with all the soft grass a couple would want. The rink itself was fairly clean. The girls had made a dance floor out of it with soap powder. Steve Akosy was good for six hours of accordion playing if you treated him right. All he needed was a comfortable chair and an occasional beer. I believe Steve got more fun out of playing than most people did out of dancing. We would waltz past him and he'd grin.

The things Steve could play best were csardases and polkas. To tell the truth, that's what most of the young people there could dance best anyhow. They were all American born, but they had learned to dance at local weddings or at the affairs of the Ukrainian sick and benevolent order. Stella Yarosz was about the only one who preferred the Lindy Hop. Still, she could do most anything in the way of dancing. Stella Yarosz and Steve took turns in calling the numbers for square dances.

Tony never could dance with a single partner, but in the square dances he got by all right. Between all that dancing and cake eating he was having himself a pretty good time. He sat on the railing next to me and he said, "How do you figure Stella would go in the movies?"

"She's good-looking enough," I said, "but she's too big for the movies."

"She's got a cousin that's a photographer in Fort Wayne. He said she'd go good."

"She's too big," I said. "Stella weighs about a hundred and thirty. She'd tower over a guy like Cagney or George Raft."

"What do you figure she's going to recite?"

"She wouldn't say."

We were all wondering what Stella would recite but the girls were keeping it for a surprise. We stopped dancing for a while and Margie Danachek sang "Home on the Range." She had to repeat that and then she sang a Ukrainian song with an easy refrain which we could pick up.

H. M.

Tony and I were comparing cakes when a strange fellow came in from the barroom. He was tall and very good-looking and extremely well dressed. He was too well dressed to have come from Fort Wayne even. He had Harvard or something written all over him.

He said, "Pardon me for intruding. A couple of girls and my friend and I just stopped off for gas and sandwiches. You seem to be having such a good time here, the girls began wondering if we might join you. There are only four of us and I assure you we'd not be in the way."

"Sure," Tony said. "We ain't exclusive."

"Thanks a lot," the young fellow said. "My name's Waldo Hackett."

He went out and brought in the other three, and their names were Bill, Doris, and Kay. Bill was not nearly as good-looking as Waldo, but he was dressed just as well. Doris and Kay wore evening gowns. They were about the best-looking girls man had seen in Cayuna County.

They all shook hands with Tony and me and sat down along the railing.

"Here is where Stella gives up the idea of going into the movies," I said.

"Are them two movie actresses?" Tony said.

"They might just as well be. Did you ever see such lookers?"

"Not me," Tony said. "Man alive."

"Let's join the square dance, Doris said.

"You better not," I said. "It's about over now."

"Will you have a drink?" Waldo said. He took out a flask.

Tony and I drank. Even Tony, who made his own moonshine, could tell Waldo's brandy was good. Bill, too, had a flask, and he offered it to Kay, who took quite a slug. She had brown, wavy hair and deep-set eyes and a belly that showed through the satin. Doris was peaches and cream.

Waldo said, "That's quite an orchestra there."

"Steve's all right," Tony said.

I went out and I said to Andy, "Didn't I tell you to keep strangers out?"

"Why in hell didn't you keep them out? He asked you. Look at the bus they got." They had a big Cadillac parked in front of Andy's kennel.

"Where they from?"

"I don't know," Andy said. "Wisconsin license. What are you going to do with them?"

"I don't know."

WHEN I got back to the rink Steve Akosy was playing a fast Polish number, but the dance floor was empty. Most of the boys were gathered in a semicircle around Doris and Kay. Margie Danachek and Stella and the rest of the girls sat in the opposite corner behind the cake table. I went over to them and said, "Why aren't any of you dancing?"

"What do they want to come in here for?" Margie said.

"They're not doing any harm. Just ignore them."

"Why don't they go back to Fort Wayne where they belong?" she said.

"They're from Wisconsin," I said. "This Waldo seems to be a nice guy. Go offer him some cake and loosen up for Christ's sakes."

"I wouldn't give them any cake."

"Nor me neither," one of the girls from the mill said.

"Well, dance with me, one of you, and stop looking like a funeral."

But none of them would dance. They sat there in the mail-order gingham and the federal-relief calico, looking sorer by the minute.

"What do you have against these people?" I said. "They haven't done you anything. Go offer them some cake at least."

"I wouldn't give them any cake," Margie said.

"For Christ's sakes," I said. "You don't want to go and break up the social. Stella, will you recite your poem now?"

"No."

On the other side, the semicircle gave way and the two girls, Doris and Kay, came on the dance floor and began trucking. I must

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say they were good. They were about the same size, so when they came together the tips of their breasts touched, and then they shimmied.

Steve's accordion let out a shrill note and he hollered, "Hey, what do you call that?"

Kay turned around and smiled at him. She said, "Swiss movement." Apparently they had decided to liven up the party again. Waldo Hackett joined the group of our girls. I looked to see if one of them would offer a slice of cake, but they wouldn't. He asked Margie to dance and she refused. I turned to watch the two girls in evening dress, and soon Waldo came onto the floor, dancing with Stella Yarosz. He was probably even handsomer a guy than his girl was beautiful. His friend Bill also tried to get one of our girls to dance, but they all turned him down. At first I thought Bill and Waldo were football players from Wisconsin U. They looked too light for that, but they might have been a couple of ends. This Waldo was a real dancer. Most of the boys were ogling Doris and Kay, but to me Waldo was even more impressive.

Tony said, "That guy's good."

"It's all training," I said. "Training, that's all."

TONY went out to the bar. Steve kept on playing. Doris and Kay must have been drunk. They got hotter and hotter. Naturally the boys lapped it up, but nobody could have a really good time with the dead weight of our girls squatting glum in that corner. You couldn't budge a single one of them. They hung together like sheep in a storm. They sat there in the calico dresses, just whispering and looking. When Steve finished his number, Doris and Kay, Waldo and Stella all converged on me.

Waldo said, "Miss Yarosz tells me you're going to have entertainment."

"She's it," I said. "Stella, will you recite your poem now?"

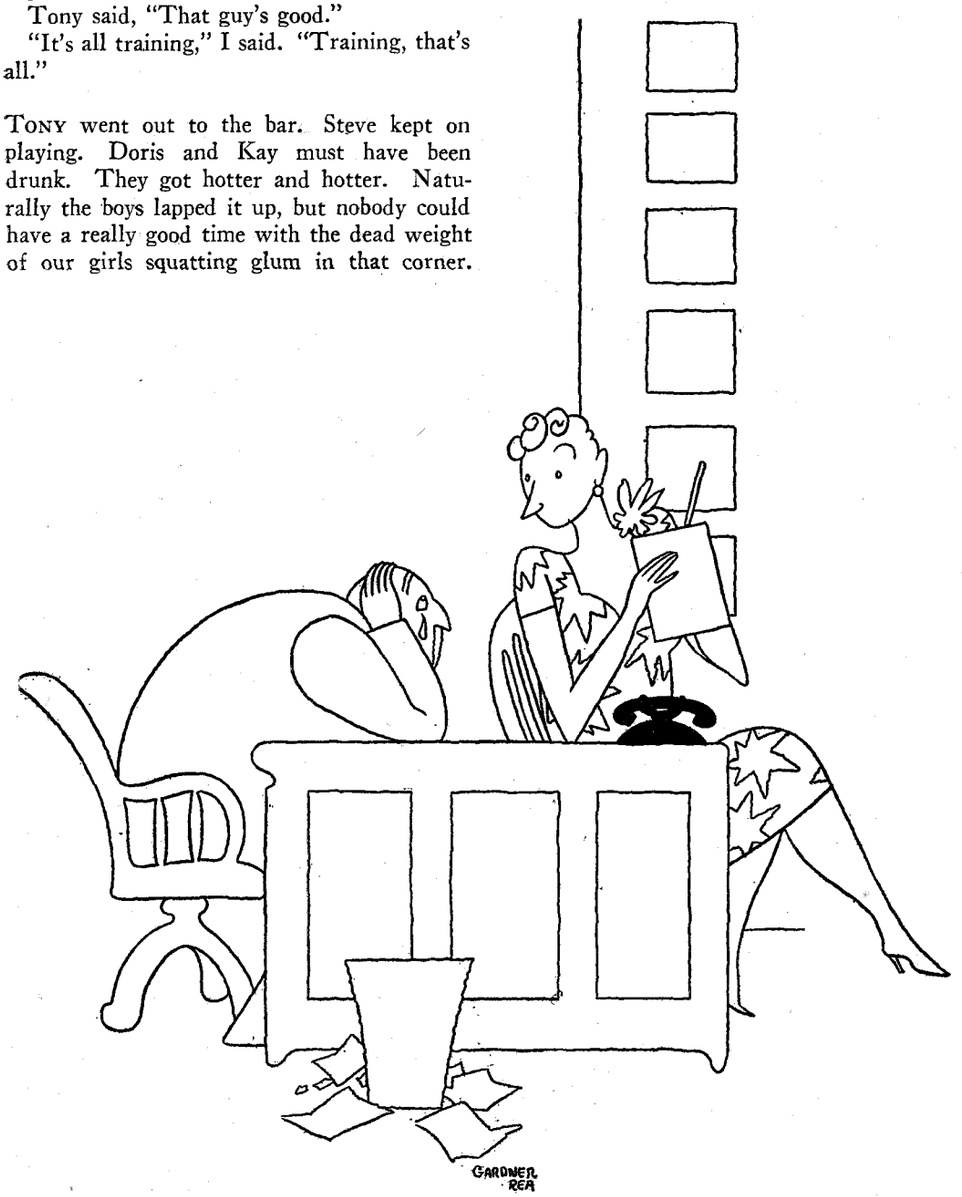
"No," she said.

"Please do," Waldo said.

"No." She looked at Doris and Kay and saw how beautiful and beautifully dressed they were, and she went back to our girls' corner.

"Doris," Waldo said, "why don't you give us a song?"

She said all right and went over to Steve. She put her arm around his shoulder and consulted with him. Steve played "Frankie and Johnny" and Doris began to sing. Most of our people were familiar with the tune, but Doris used the words I had first heard in Harlem, and then some.



"It's terrible to be class conscious, Miss Entwhistle." *Gardner Rea*

Steve was red above his accordion. The pool players came in. People avoided my eyes and each other's. There was not a whore in Cayuna who would have dared to sing those verses in public. Doris was blonde and very lovely. When she got through no one said anything. Our girls were no longer whispering. Waldo and Bill applauded politely, then a few of the boys clapped, too. I asked Steve to keep on playing. Waldo asked Stella to dance again but she wouldn't. Kay came and put her arms around him and they danced. No one else took the floor and they rose to the occasion. Doris smiled at Steve and at me, and we tried to smile back.

After a while Tony staggered in from the bar with a load on. He stood in front of me with his hands hanging low and he said, "That guy thinks he's good, don't he?"

"Well, what?" I said.

"He thinks he can show us up for a bunch of hayseeds," Tony said. "He'll be wearing his ass in a sling before I get through with him."

"Easy."

"Easy?" He had a load on. He walked unsteadily across the floor and shoved the dancing Waldo. "You think you're pretty good, don't you?" He hauled off but Waldo ducked and brought one off his hip, a short neat cut that dumped Tony straight on his can. It seemed as though this bastard Waldo Hackett could do everything.

Half a dozen boys swarmed over Tony and forced him into the back room. They knew what he was likely to do in a fight.

I picked the two girls' wraps off a chair and handed it to them. I said, "Go out through the barroom and get into that Cadillac as soon as you can. Never mind the speed cops. There aren't any on this road."

"I'll take him on," Waldo said quietly. He was confident and graceful. "I can handle him."

"The hell you could. He'd rip you apart. Just get into your car and step it up in case he tries to follow. He'll run you into a ditch if you don't."

"I'm awfully sorry we couldn't hit it off," Waldo said. "We did our best."

"It's been a pleasure," I said.

THEY went through the barroom and we all watched them get into the Cadillac. Bill took the wheel. He drove with assurance. By that time Tony had freed himself. He knew he was too drunk to drive after them. All he could do was mumble, and sit on the bench in front of Andy's kennels.

"Tony could have took him," Steve said.

I tried to whip the social back into shape. Steve played on but nobody danced. They couldn't get over that version of "Frankie and Johnny." The pool players went back to their table. Finally I got Stella Yarosz to recite her poem and it turned out to be "Gunga Din," a hell of a comedown after that song. Not even the girls liked it. They were sore at Stella for having danced with Waldo anyway. For all the drinks and cakes, that social certainly was a flop.

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We're Writing a Book

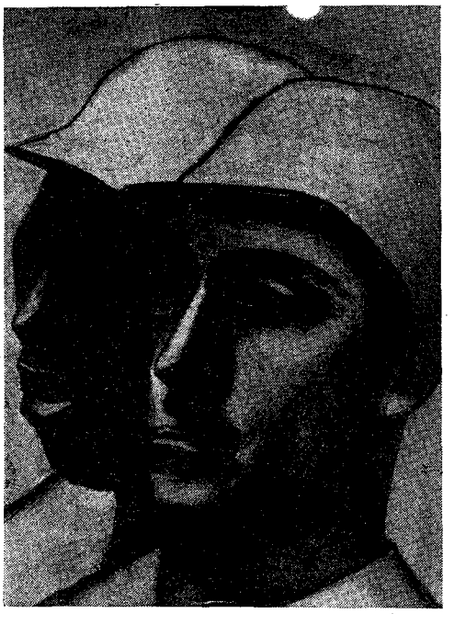
The author is writing a working-class novel under the close supervision of the real-life counterparts of its characters. The plan seems to be working well

By Naomi Mitchison

IT IS fairly plain that, in these days, one brain cannot hold the assemblage of facts and relationships which are needed for skilled accuracy in any of the professions which cover a big sector of life. No scientist would dream of shutting himself up in a laboratory and never talking things over with his colleagues or reading their papers; nor do the really great scientists confine their contacts to fellow scientists—they know they have to be in touch with the world. The same with other research workers and technicians, with architects, with any philosopher who is worth listening to. Only in the direct arts, especially in writing, has the ivory-tower tradition survived, and the idea that any writer can spin a perfect web, unaided, out of his or her own guts. Hence, the extreme boringness of most novels.

Writers of history or even historical fiction have necessarily to look beyond their own navels. They have to be in touch, at least, with dead minds. I found quite early that this wasn't enough; unless one was in constant communication with experts, one was likely to miss some vital fact; as far as possible, too, it was better to make them put their ideas directly into one's mind; one's job became that of coördinator and shaper of often shapeless and chaotic expert ideas, making them into a pattern and story in which later they could recognize their own significance and their relation with other material. It was not the same job as that of the ivory-tower fictionist, though many of the technical problems were the same; it appeared to me as more of a woman's job—creating something as definite and deliberate and worth-while as a child, out of the wild imaginations of others, whom I must light up for a moment of being in touch, and might then forget.

BUT LATER and when, half by accident, I found myself working in the labor movement, caught up by it, unable to think of any history less recent than that in which I was living, the problem presented itself differently. I began to write my first modern novel, trying to shape it as though it were thought of historically. But I couldn't get the minds to light with mine, not at first. Then, when the book was sticking, in the summer of 1932, I went to the U.S.S.R. as one of a party of investigators from the New Fabian Research Bureau—nothing to do with art or literature!—and happened to run into a poet at Kharkov, who told me with enthusiasm that he read his poems aloud to



Workers — *Elizabeth Olds*

the factory workers in their dinner hour and received their criticisms. As a matter of fact, it seemed rather doubtful whether he paid much practical attention to the criticism, but it was obviously the smart thing for a Russian writer in 1932 to do, and the editions of his poetry books were enormous! But we in England with all our factory legislation . . . no, no, neither workers nor management would stand for having anything read aloud to them, least of all *poetry*.

But I did manage to collect a group to whom I read some of my first modern novel, *We Have Been Warned*. It was got together by the agent of the King's Norton Divisional Labor Party—my husband's division—and they were all Labor Party folk, very respectable on the whole, especially the wives, mostly in reasonably secure jobs. And, though I had worked with them now for two years, they did not quite trust me; indeed they were right not to, for I was untried; they thought of me as a bit odd and unaccountable—they were a little frightened and yet determined not to take my highbrowism and literature too seriously. The result of this was that, though I got some criticism, it was not adequate; it was too much on details, too little on the general outlook. In the group, it was only two or three of the men who ever criticized; the most useful criticism was apt to come later, while washing up in the kitchen perhaps, from the women, who were very shy and hesitant, but sometimes gave me the kind of momentary lighting-up which I needed before I could get their ideas through into my story.

FOR ANOTHER three years I worked with those folk and elsewhere in the world's socialist movement, all the time getting a little nearer and learning a great deal; and they were beginning deliberately to teach me, to suggest ideas for me to pick up and work on. From time to time I would try out my things on anyone in the division who had time to listen, and sometimes I tried out poems by Auden—himself a Birmingham man—which they mostly couldn't stick, even when I explained them, and by Day Lewis, some of which they liked a lot. And I learned to think and write quite easily in the rather undistinguished Midland dialect, which yet has its own shades and its own phrases and its peculiar circumlocutions, all in the same cadence. Then the general election came, and our defeat, made less bitter but yet also less bearable, by the extraordinarily gentle and understanding kindness of the workers.

I was thinking out another novel then, a war-and-revolution situation in England, and had started writing it, but was uncertain of the plot or of how it was to develop; I had chosen a technically difficult form, but I wanted to make it clear, so that I shouldn't be turned down as the highbrow poets had been, by the audience I now wanted. I talked about this to one of our workers, a skilled man in a big factory, the kind who doesn't believe in reading anything more frivolous than Marx. I don't think he had then read any of my fiction; he would have counted it a waste of time. But I put it to him as a craftsman that I, as a craftsman, was in difficulties; and he offered to get together a group who would help me and not be shy of me. I gave him the names of two or three men I wanted, because they were in the same jobs as characters in my book. I also suggested that perhaps I might have in the local vicar, who was thoroughly sympathetic, and whom I had to consult sooner or later about a character in the book who was a vicar. But that wasn't allowed; religion was opium for the people—and besides, he'd make the rest of them feel uncomfortable. So I had to consult my vicar separately.

THE GROUP as now constituted has about fifteen members, though not all can come every time. The men are mostly fairly

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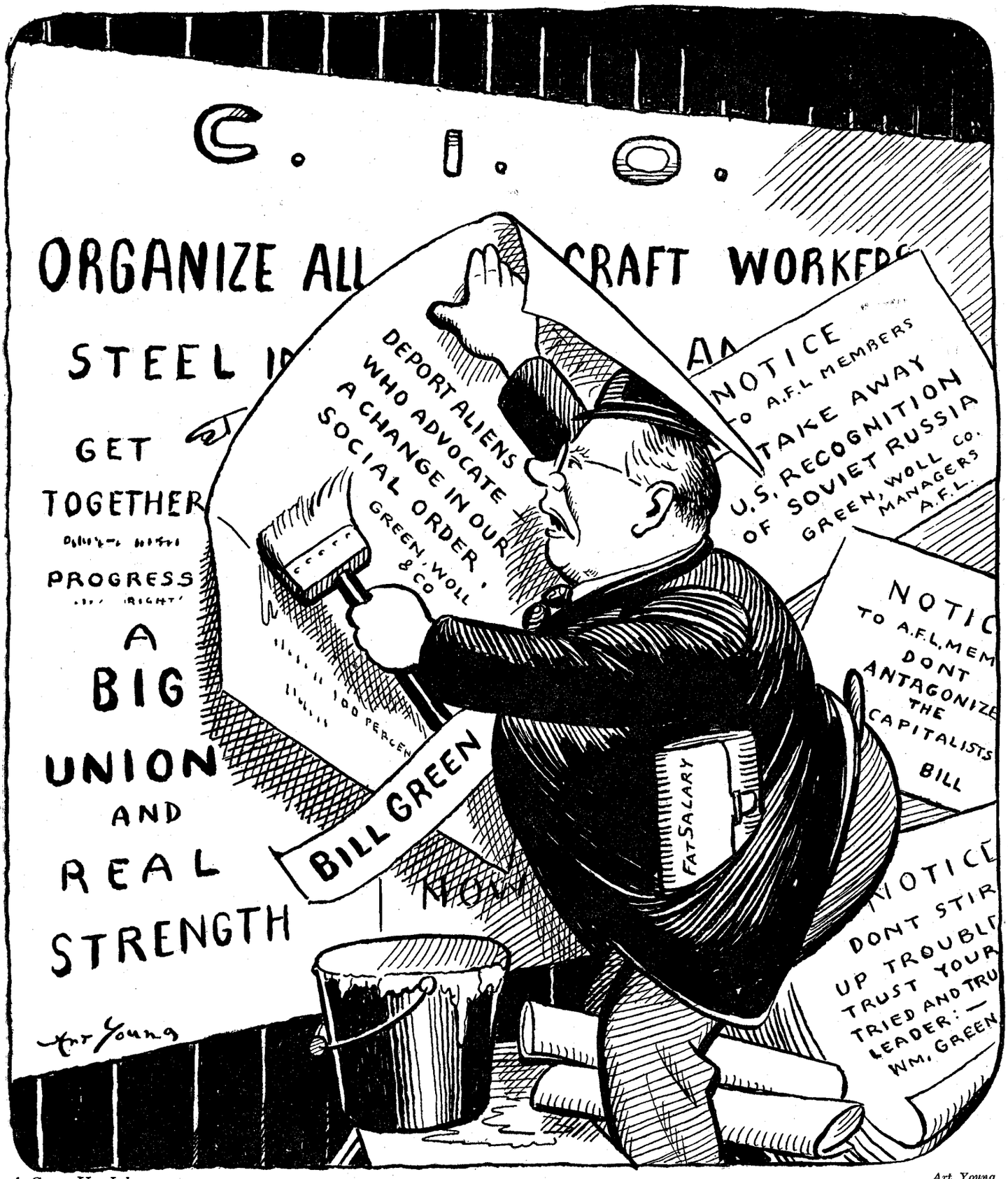
skilled, earning £3 to £6 a week; most of the women are non-earning wives, though one or two have been in industry and one is a teacher (and never says a word!). Most are in the Labor Party, but one or two are to the Left—we had an excellent united front during the election, as many constituencies had, unofficially—and one believes in social credit. My book is highly political and it is interesting to watch Communists and Labor Party members all eager that I should be fair to—the others! My main working-class characters are Kitch, a draftsman (there are two draftsmen from different factories on the group) and Bob, a pattern-maker (there is an oldish pattern-maker in the group, an ex-I.L.P. man, who is one of the best at getting me to do what he wants). I read the book aloud and whenever I go badly wrong on details they interrupt and we wrangle about it; if they think I've left



A Cover-Up Job

Art Young

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something out I can very often put it in there and then—last time I put a crane into a foundry scene, as they said there ought to be one, and they enjoyed seeing me work on my craft right under their noses. If I go wrong in conversations, they stop me and say: "No, what he'd have said would have been ——" But that is all detail; what is far more important is the main ideas. They have to give me their special ideas which they have as conscious workers, just as, earlier, I had to try and get from experts the ideas which Athenians or Spartans might have had. Here, much comes indirectly. They talk among themselves, getting things into focus, restating something which up to now they have only thought of in bogus Marxist terms or which has never even come into words. I tend to sit quietly eating chocolate drops, which one of them, who is a Cadbury worker, gets cheap, and sometimes I ask an important question which sets the talk on fire again, and I try to understand not with my head but with my nerves.

Then we discuss what is to happen next in the book, and how the working-class characters will react; the group has altered these characters a good deal, making me give some of them a different twist. We discuss the details of the story's action; one of the most helpful here is a quiet little Labor Party man, a factory worker, who told me once, after the group had broken up and I was walking down the road with him, that he always wanted to repaper his house and make it look nice with bright paints, but his wife wouldn't let him; this does instead. Where a chapter relates to anyone's own experience, it usually means an interesting bit of talk afterwards; this happened especially after the chapter in which the hero's sister gets seduced! At present it is written in the real language which real people use; presumably that will have to be altered before publication, but the group get a lot of fun out of it now, especially the women!—and I get an interesting sidelight on the different ways that different social classes regard swearing.

EVERY now and then they tell me to do something which I can't do, or which I am certain would be wrong artistically—it would spoil the balance of the book or it would turn out to be sentimental. Then I say I won't, and explain why. It has all got to be written by me, however much I take from them. But I am sure that the best part of the book is a section which they said I must put in. It was perfectly right from the artistic point of view to have it in, but I had shirked it—I didn't think I could do it; in fact, I couldn't have done it without the group behind me and the direct inspiration I got from them. The section deals with the spread of revolutionary feeling through various groups of skilled workers in England; to get the background, one of the group took me round the factory where he works, which includes a great variety of processes; and he made me see the things I needed. I have done the same kind of thing before, being taken round museums by experts. In both factory and museum one has to make oneself submissive to impressions and yet remain sharply intent. I noticed all kinds of things that I did not know at the time I was noticing.

Some parts of this book deal with other kinds of people, my own middle class and so on. Here too, I have insisted on being helped. Two characters start the book at school and the children whom I consulted—or rather, perhaps, young adolescents—told me firmly how bad school conversations in books always are. Next, I stalked three of them and got down some fragments of conversation. The resulting scenes were submitted to their criticism and finally passed. Equally, a biochemist and the vicar who wouldn't fit in with my group are helping me over their own jobs.

IT SEEMS at least possible that one may achieve something worth doing in this way. Several best-selling authors might be made uncomfortable at hearing what the group (it calls itself, by the way, my Proletarian Committee) thinks of them when they deal with working-class situations. Actually, most "proletarian" novels in this country have dealt with the unskilled worker and the unemployed; I think the skilled workers, when they realize this, resent it. It is much easier, in a way, writing about unskilled people at the almost savage level, *from above;* a nice, convincingly bloody and unpleasant and ruthless picture can be made; emotions must be kept crude; situations must be earthily simple. And it is exceedingly unlikely that the people you write about will ever read your book. But the skilled workers are not crude or simple and they have most complicated and delicate emotions and ideas about their jobs and about their place in civilization. It seems not improbable that in England, at least, they may be the crucial factor in any political change. But they are little written about or considered as people; they are a difficult field—such of them as take to writing seldom want to remember their early environment. If I have done nothing else, I have given these people a sense of their own importance and dignity as people and as necessary parts of any better system of living. Because of being treated seriously, not as means but as ends, they will be able to be more consciously and more successfully themselves, moving with purpose in a world that they and I together want to change.

Mackey

UNNATURAL HISTORY—IV

HIGHLY magnified parasites of the Termite order (*Lousi capitalistici*). They resemble ants in being social insects, living in houses and building nests and hills, but in disposition they are allied to the Thugfly. To the left is the Rockefeller Roach (*Soconi mummi*). This is always found near oil and sometimes on golf courses. It lives longer than most insects and is held to be sacred by the superstitious. The elusive Pittsburgh Pest (*Mellonus boloni*) is found mostly in aluminum, coal, and steel, and is very hard to capture. Increasing attempts to get these creatures under control have been making it extremely difficult for them to multiply in France and Spain. They are not found at all in the Soviet Union, owing to the constant care taken by the health authorities.—JOHN MACKEY.

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The Line-Up in Spain

Possession of the mines, the factories, the food supply, the railroads is decisive in civil war. Here's the story

By John Sterling

SINCE the outbreak of the civil war in Spain two months ago the insurgents have been largely stalemated in their key positions. Barring foreign intervention, their trained military forces and Moorish mercenaries seem likely to succumb before the republican army in overalls.

The February elections were a decisive victory for the People's Front, even though the Rightist government then in power had indulged in numerous irregularities at the polls. Spurned by the electorate, the conspirators in the army hatched their plot, lining up all the anti-democratic forces within the nation and all the fascist powers on the continent: the Spanish Phalanx, monarchists of the Bourbon, Juanist, and Carlist factions, Jesuits and the party of Catholic Action, grandees, financiers, and industrialists, the agents of German, Italian, French, and Portuguese fascism, and a few English bankers who wanted "insurance against Communism." Their military uprising was set for July 26, but the dramatic incident of Calvo Sotelo's assassination, the elimination of a monarchist leader who was one of the staunchest supporters of the putsch, forced the hand of the army.

The rebel plan was extremely simple. General Franco, having assumed command in Morocco, was to rush troops across the Strait of Gibraltar, march through Andalusia, and strike at Madrid from the south. General Sanjurjo was to fly from Lisbon and lead the attack from the west. General Mola was to organize the reactionaries in Navarre and descend upon Madrid through the Guadarrama mountain passes on the north. General Goded was to abandon his post in the Balearic Islands, capture Barcelona, and then advance from the northeast. The capital would be encircled and taken by storm. All republican leaders were to be shot and a fascist dictatorship established.

The insurrectionists counted upon a surprise attack and upon the superior force of trained troops in the field against civilian republicans. After weeks of fighting their campaign has failed on almost all fronts, even though a preliminary analysis of the disposition of the fascist armies gives them certain obvious advantages.

The leaders of the revolt were division commanders in the Canaries, the Balearic Islands, and Morocco, whose soldiers were cut off from the mass of the people on the mainland. These men, ignorant of the social conflicts in Spain, were amenable to the exhortations and pressure of their superiors. On the peninsula five of the eight military bases were immediately occupied by the rebels. Seville, with the largest concentration of troops in the south, even though it had a militant working class to defend it, could not withstand the combined onslaught of the Moors and the treachery of the soldiers in its own barracks. Saragossa, the seat of the military academies and the officers of the general staff, almost an impregnable fortress, was seized by the fascists. Burgos and Valladolid, small cities in a countryside peopled by a church-ridden peasantry, became the headquarters of the counter-revolution. Coruna, the military establishment of Galicia, isolated in the northeastern corner of Spain, was transformed into a reactionary stronghold.

But in the three great capitals, Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia, the fascist army officers who read pronunciamentos of rebellion to the soldiers in the barracks were surrounded by the workers' militia and in some cases shot down by their own men. In Madrid, the great administrative and financial metropolis of Spain; in Barcelona, the capital of the most industrialized province; and in Valencia, the center of the fruit trade, military garrisons remained loyal to the republic. As a result Madrid has all the gold of the Bank of Spain with which to purchase supplies, and the factories of Barcelona can work at top speed turning out tanks and airplanes.

IT IS naturally difficult to estimate the numerical strength of the rebels. Spain had a weak army, judged by contemporary European standards—only 200,000 men. Of these, 58,000 picked troops were stationed outside the peninsula, in Morocco and the islands. General Franco has been able to transport only some 20,000 men of the Foreign Legion and the native Moorish battalions because of the loyalist naval successes in the strait and the vigilant air patrol of the Azaña government. The fascist generalissimo must retain men at their posts in North Africa because the nationalist Moors have been chafing under new tax levies and await a propitious moment for an uprising in their own right.

Yet in the garrisons captured by the insurgents it may be said that the infantry of 80,000 men is to a large extent behind the fascists, and their 15,000 machine guns and 100 tanks are a formidable power. The cavalry and artillery are likewise predominantly reactionary.

In contrast, the air force, which is composed of new and more progressive elements, has remained faithful to the republic. Most of Spain's 1,600 airplanes fell into the hands of the loyalists, but in the rebel areas there were enough aristocratic sportsmen to pilot any planes they could obtain. German Junkers and Fokkers and Italian Capronis have been manned by trained foreign army officers who proffered their services at crucial moments and, in spite of all the neutrality pacts, have continued with other clandestine intervention.

The navy, composed of fifty-three units, has remained with the government, except for a few cruisers. When officers urged their men to join the rebel cause, the sailors imprisoned their superiors and took command of the ships. This loyalist navy has been able to interrupt the transport of Moroccan troops, a vital reserve of man-power for the fascists. It has also protected the long Mediterranean coastline from Barcelona to Malaga, thus providing a source of food supplies and preserving the all-important military and naval arsenal at Cartagena.

A NARROW strip along the northern coastline, from Irun to Oviedo, is second only to Catalonia as an industrial area. Here there are paper mills, textile factories, and iron works. Of the strategic cities in this district, San Sebastian was early recaptured by the government, and renewed attacks of Mola's troops have been repulsed. Bilbao, the center of the armaments industry, has not even been threatened by the rebels, while Asturian workers have beleaguered Oviedo, the heart of the coal-mining district. After a valiant defense by the People's Front, Irun fell before Mola's forces.

The rebels, entrenched in the cities of Andalusia which they have taken, cannot advance too far on the road to Madrid without leaving behind a civilian population prepared to rise against them in the rear and cut off their lines of communication. As they push their way through tiny villages, the peasants harass them with a continuous guerilla warfare, reviving scenes of Napoleon's peninsular campaign. These are the provinces where the large estates of the absentee nobles were being divided among their tenants. The capture of Badajoz, an isolated city in bleak Estremadura, has been the outstanding fascist

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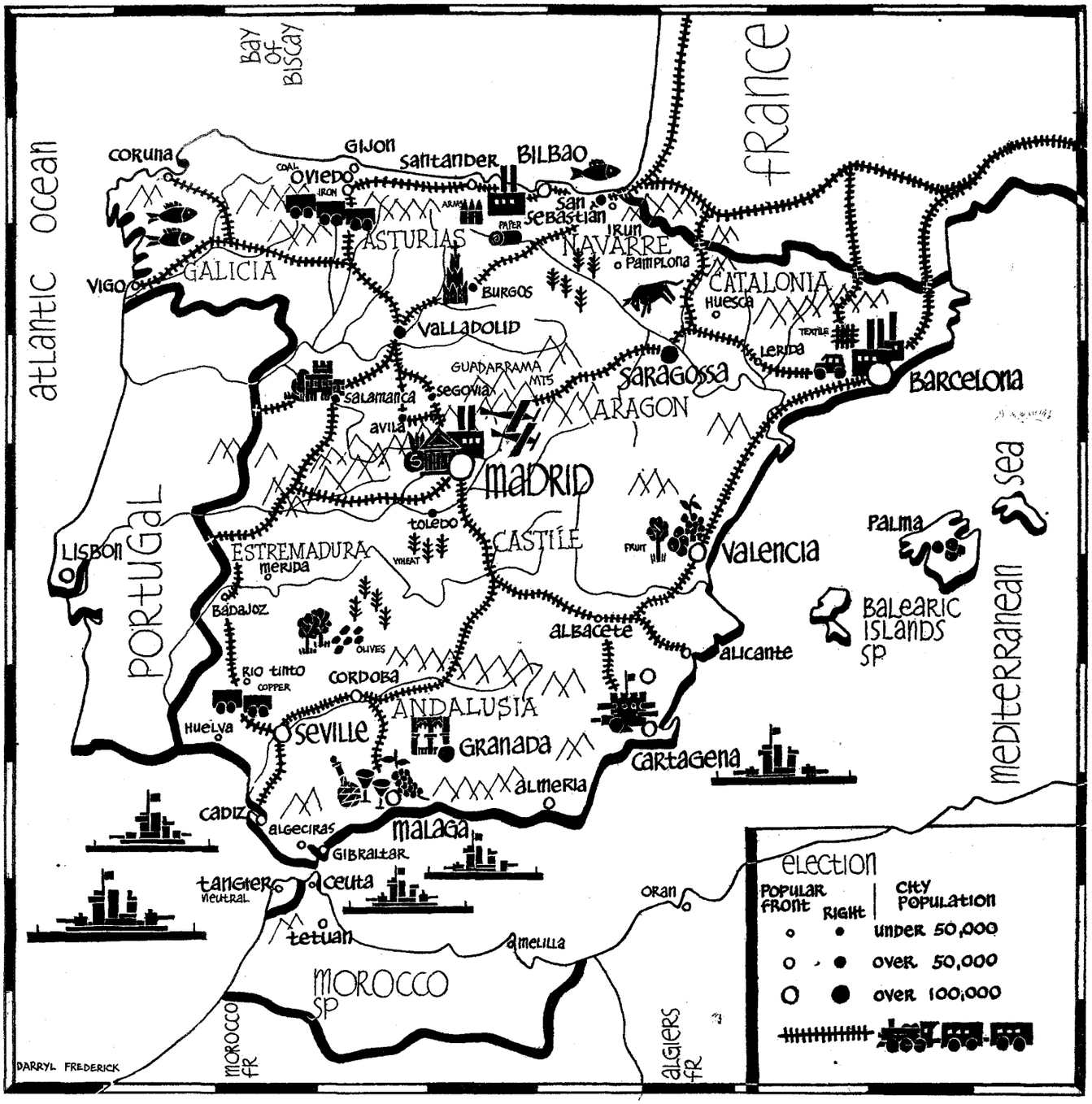

Darryl Frederick

victory. The slaughter of thousands of civilians must continue to be the fascist method of warfare if they mean to establish regular railroad contact between the northern and southern sectors of their armies.

To the north of Madrid, the rebels hold ancient cities with many historic associations but few inhabitants. Salamanca has its famous university. Avila has for centuries been known as the "city of the dead." Burgos is an old cathedral town. Peasants of Navarre, the Vendée of Spain, the only section of the country where the land is divided into small parcels, have remained under the domination of the church, and the priests have whipped up enthusiasm, as for a religious crusade. Though General Mola will be difficult to dislodge from his mountain fortresses, the much-heralded advance on the capital is beset with countless obstacles. The government holds enough rocky passes to block his path long before he comes within cannon shot of Madrid.

AT THE MOMENT the friends of the Spanish republic may feel confident in an ultimate victory. The parties of the People's Front are maintaining firm unity of action both on the battlefield and in the organization of victory behind the lines. All attempts to sow dissension between the Anarchists and other Left groupings have failed miserably, and the anti-fascist committees have once again proved their practical ability to coördinate industries and supplies towards the one end of defeating the counter-revolution.

Saragossa is besieged by battalions of Catalan militiamen under the Syndicalist Durutti. The rebel barracks at Oviedo are being attacked by miners with the Socialist Gonzalez Pena at their head. The Mangada column, defending Madrid in the Guadarrama mountains, has outstanding Communists in command. Government aviation squadrons are destroying the rebel morale by repeated bombings of their army headquarters in Ceuta, Seville, Granada, Cordoba, and Huesca. The republican militia is learning to use its weapons and is maintaining its discipline. Defections among the fascists are numerous; officers dare not trust their Moors.

If the reactionary powers of Europe are kept in check and the delivery of aircraft and munitions to the rebels is stopped, the government of the People's Front, strengthened by the new Left cabinet, will defeat the insurgents in this historic struggle between fascism and democracy. Once more the heroism and self-sacrifice of republicans will triumph in the *levée en masse* against a hired soldiery.

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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★

The Challenge and the Answer

A STRIKING feature of the last presidential campaign was the formation of the League of Professional Groups for Foster and Ford. That was news. It was also history, for it was one of the first organized attempts of American professionals to take part in the struggle against all that is evil and reactionary in our life.

"There is only one issue in the present election," the League said in *Culture and the Crisis,* its open letter to the intellectual workers of America. "Call it hard times, unemployment, the farm problem, the world crisis, or call it simply hunger . . . the issue is the same."

What drew many intellectuals to the Communist Party in 1932 was the realization that the economic crisis crushed the professional groups as ruthlessly as it did the workers and farmers; and that the Communist Party offered "the only practicable solution of the crisis."

In the present election campaign the issue is still "hard times, unemployment, the farm problem, the world crisis or . . . simply hunger"; but this issue is now part of another issue which includes and transcends it. And again it is the Communist Party which has stated the issue most clearly. Out of the economic crisis of capitalism, out of the inability of Wall Street to solve the problems of hunger and unemployment, there have arisen the alternatives: progress or reaction, democracy or fascism.

Can anyone with a grain of common sense look at the American scene today without realizing the danger which threatens the people? Can anyone but a blockhead ignore the meaning of Hearst, the Liberty League, the Black Legion, the open-shop drive? Do we dare close our eyes to the organized attempt of reactionary big business to foist upon this country some form of Hitlerism?

This year, as distinguished from 1932, professional men and women are by and large politically awake. Suffering has matured them; study has enlightened them; action has steeled them. Much more than in previous periods of our history they will take part in the election campaign, aware that their fate is inseparable from the fate of the people.

BUT SPECIFIC CHOICES have still to be made. The most enlightened Americans have already recognized—and as the campaign goes on they see it all the more clearly—that *Lemke means Landon and Landon means Hearst.* These are three heads of the same monster.

Members of the various professions recognize this and think that Roosevelt can be relied upon to defeat the reactionaries. But is it not a fact that the more Roosevelt has been readily supported from the Left, the more he has felt that the concessions he must make are to the Right? Is it not obvious that the progressive forces of this country must create a strong political organization, an independent force, before they can even begin to stop Roosevelt from surrendering their rights and liberties to the extreme reaction?

In this situation, the position of the Socialist Party is very unfortunate. It has refused coöperation with other progressive groups, and is moving into an abstract and doctrinaire sectarianism, away from the main currents of American life.

William Sanderson

IN THIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN, as in that of 1932, many professional men and women feel that it is the Communist Party which "offers the only practicable solution of the crisis." A number of them, therefore, with Rockwell Kent, internationally known artist and writer, as their chairman, have formed a Committee of Professional Groups for Browder and Ford. They believe that the issues of the present campaign are "democracy versus fascism, peace versus war," and that the Communist candidates have stated the main issues most clearly and have offered the best solutions.

The NEW MASSES salutes the newly organized Committee of Professional Groups for Browder and Ford. It seems to us that the Communist Party and its candidates are seeking primarily to unite the greatest number of those who work with hand or brain around a program which would create a better life for the majority of the American people. It urges jobs and a living wage for all; it seeks unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, and social security for all; its program for the youth is the most realistic and the most comprehensive in the field; its farm plank boldly demands that farmers be freed of oppressive debts, unbearable tax burdens, and foreclosures; it urges that social and labor legislation be financed and the budget balanced by taxing the rich; it insists upon the defense and extension of democratic rights and civil liberties, and upon limiting the autocratic powers of the Supreme Court; it demands full rights for the Negro people; and its program for peace seeks the *organization* of genuinely effective collective security.

On this basis, the Committee of Professional Groups for Browder and Ford should have no difficulty uniting large numbers of professional men and women who are anxious to take their stand on the burning issues of the day.

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READERS' FORUM

More Funds for Spain

Last week $100 was raised by the workers, guests and proprietors of the Eager Rose Garden, Bushville, New York, to aid the United Front Government of Spain in their courageous battle against the fascists. The money was sent to swell the fund now being raised by the I.L.G.W.U.

We feel that the Spanish workers and peasants are not only fighting for their own existence but are also waging a battle against international fascism which threatens the peoples of the world.

EAGER ROSE GARDEN, INC.,
Shop Unit, C.P.U.S.A.

And Still More

Readers of NEW MASSES will be pleased to know that comrades vacationing at Uncas Lodge, Uncasville, Connecticut, together with workers and the management of the camp, have raised $35 as a contribution to the fighting forces of the Spanish People's Popular Front.

UNITED FRONTER.

[Other readers who wish to contribute to the defense of Spanish democracy are urged to send funds to the United Committee for Struggle Against Spanish Fascism, 21 E. 17th Street, New York City. —THE EDITORS.]

Sound Principle

It is high time that the NEW MASSES editors and contributors consider the fact that if the magazine ever expects to build up any circulation, and if it expects to have any real influence on America, it must speak of and to non-Communist progressives as progressives. It must learn to take issue with these Progressives in a friendly way and to reserve its sarcasm for the Liberty League, Hearst and others of their type.

Coöperativists *are* progressive people. Even Mr. Ward [who reviewed *Sweden: The Middle Way* and *Finland, the New Nation* in our issue of August 18] almost admits that to anyone who can read between the lines. Coöperativists may still believe in capitalism, but with a little friendliness and explanation on our part they may become anti-capitalist fighters at least. Also, with ever so little sarcasm directed at these "oh so well behaved people," as Mr. Ward calls them, they may become Red-baiters.

Lenin said, "A Communist's first duty is *patiently* to explain." Mr. Ward might think this over.

M. J. HENRY.

More on Ward and Childs

Harold Ward did a timely and interesting job when he reviewed three current books on the cooperative movement in your issue of August 18, but I believe he committed one error that should be corrected.

In discussing *Sweden: The Middle Way,* by Marquis W. Childs, Mr. Ward said: "Where he [Childs] goes wrong is not in his admiration of coöperation as an instrument of social security, but in his complete failure to understand that no amount of *consumer* action within the capitalist framework can have ultimate success without the organized support of the producers (that is, labor) in breaking away from both the economic and political consequences of the private ownership of the means of production."

This is just exactly where Mr. Childs does *not* go wrong. His treatment of this specific question is what makes his book worth three or four of the mediocre coöp books which are glutting the market at present.

On pages 163-4 Childs says: "How long Sweden will be able to maintain the present balance depends obviously on such a number of factors that any prediction is worthless. It is a small state dependent upon world trade at a phase of rapid world change when one crisis follows upon another with almost monotonous regularity. It is, moreover, a capitalist country in which an owning class still exerts a considerable measure of control. One would scarcely predict the lengths to which this class, threatened with the loss of social and economic privileges, might go in its defense.

"At the depth of the depression troops were called out during a strike in the wood-pulp mills of the north. Firing upon the strikers, they killed two and wounded several."

The objectivity of these sentences alone puts Childs's book in a class far above the rest of the current books on the coöperative movement. But the author goes further. In pointing to the tragic destruction of the Vienna coöp apartment houses by Fascism, Childs says: ". . . when the issue was essential power, the owning class did not hesitate to demolish those apartments by gunfire. This could never happen in Sweden, one is told. Our capitalists, say the Swedes, have been conditioned to yield, to compromise. And yet they have never been subjected to the test of a major crisis."

These passages make Mr. Ward's criticism very hard for me to understand. His objections apply to pretty near all current coöperative literature, but not to the Childs book.

ROBERT C. BROWNELL.

He Likes It

In the August 18 issue of your publication there was a full-page cartoon on page 7 dealing with the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. Mr. John L. Lewis saw this and thought it was a very good piece of work. He would like to have the original if possible.

Would you be kind enough to refer this suggestion to the artist. I know Mr. Lewis would also be pleased to have the artist's autograph.

KATHRYN LEWIS,
Secretary to the President,
United Mine Workers of America.

On Mike Gold's Article

Allow me to correct an impression communicated, perhaps inadvertently, by Michael Gold in his article, "Mabel Luhan's Slums," to the effect that the intellectuals of New Mexico took no interest or action in the Gallup case. Compañero Gold is right in saying that regionalist-escapist mystics were next to impossible to interest in this most burning social issue in New Mexico's dramatic four hundred years of history. But there was a minority of intellectuals who, from the day of the police murders of April 4, 1935, till the end of the trial in October, gave practically 100 percent of their time and an appreciable proportion of their income to the defense of the framed Gallup miners; and several are still active in the defense in spite of an almost total lack of coöperation from other sections of the country. I only wish I had permission to record their names.

Soriano

Compañero Gold's article errs in many other respects also—chiefly through his having looked at a mediaeval and colonial region through urban and industrialist eyes. For example, to call the pueblos "slums" is inexcusable in a Marxist. Slums are a by-product of industrialization—the home and breeding ground of the most oppressed strata of the proletariat in the most crowded industrial centers. Pueblos are classless agricultural-handicraft communities, survivals of what Engels in his "Origin of the Family" calls the primitive-communist society characteristic of the upper stage of barbarism, and the evils Gold describes are the accompaniment of barbarism rather than the result of exploitation. The importance of his errors lies in the fact that we can only formulate and disseminate a Marxist program for such a region when we understand the reasons for and origins of the conditions we want to correct. To base our campaigns on the supposition that the shocking poverty of New Mexico has the same roots as the misery of the New York East Side or Harlem, is to ride toward a rather ludicrous fall.

PHILIP STEVENSON.

A Model Strike

The kids were in short pants, most of them, but they won their strike. There were four hundred of them milling around in a dusty triangle of park, in Westfield, Massachusetts, the other day.

They were tobacco pickers, boys that worked nine hours a day on hands and knees, in the suffocating heat and dust of the tobacco tents. A lot had tobacco pickers' boils on knees and thighs. Their eyes were red, their shoulders stiff. But it wasn't shorter working hours they wanted, these school children of Westfield, Suffield, Southwick, and Windsor. They wanted more money. And they well knew how to get it.

For three days they carried on their strike. Every morning, at six o'clock in the morning, they assembled in the littered bit of park. They stood around peacefully. There were no outward signs of strike, only their rude pencilled signs tacked up on a ruined concession stand nearby. "Down with the rich!" "Soak the big fellows!" "We want $2.50 a day."

When the trucks from the nearby plantations came rumbling up, the boys stood solid. They didn't get on the trucks. In the tobacco fields of the American Sumatra Company, and Hathaway and Sheperd and Steane, the valuable shade grown tobacco stood eight feet high under acre-wide tents of gauze.

One, two, three days the plantation managers held out. Wednesday morning, August 19, the company trucks drove away from Kane Park empty. It was the third day of the strike. Inexperienced pickers had been brought in from the Connecticut towns, nearby, but they were slow, and they injured the leaves. Grown men would not do. In the three-foot rows, only agile boys, thin ones, can be used. The Westfield boys are the best in the region.

Finally, Wednesday afternoon, the Westfield chief of police came to argue for the companies. He offered a twenty-five cent daily raise. The boys refused. At length, after more talk, they agreed.

When questioned, they answered in a body. No single boy spoke. This technique was practiced to protect the leaders. For three days, close to 400 boys were on strike, yet neither reporters, managers or police could put their finger on a leader. Accordingly, no one can be fired, now that the boys are back at work. They have won a raise of a dollar and a half a week. Their wages, for the strenuous, back-breaking work, which no grown man could endure to do, is now twelve dollars a week. Before they got nine. There was a time when they got as little as six.

RACHEL M. BAKER.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Smirnov's "Shakespeare," Laski's "Rise of Liberalism," and "Steps Going Down," a prize novel

IT was inevitable that Marxist criticism should sooner or later attack the problem of Shakespeare—assuming there is a problem. Critics like Professor Stoll, recoiling from the romantic speculation over hidden meanings in the plays, present Shakespeare merely as a working dramatist—incidentally, a genius—striving for maximum dramatic effect within given theatric conventions; a limiting view, but not without its value. Of specific Marxist writings on Shakespeare there have been available, in English, Lunacharsky's essay on Bacon and Shakespeare, the Soviet critic, Sergei Dinamov, on *King Lear,* an essay by S. Nichkina on Falstaff, and now this detailed, ambitious study by A. A. Smirnov, whose book* is issued by a hard-working group of left-wing writers engaged in the valuable service of making available in English important critical writing appearing in other languages.

Critics working from the Marxist point of view, whatever their understanding of it or their skill, have an immediate advantage over the great swarm of commentators who have been buzzing about Shakespeare for many generations with apparently no method at all except rhapsody, introspective guesswork, or psychoanalytical probings. Critics equipped with Marxism at least start out with the assumption that Shakespeare's art was the creation of a historic person rooted in a given historic epoch and immersed in moral and political forces which make his work amenable to critical analysis. The "Others abide our question—Thou art free" of Matthew Arnold is justifiably passionate adoration, but not sufficient as a method of criticism.

In this reviewer's opinion, Smirnov's study of Shakespeare is an example of what to avoid if our criticism is not to degenerate into the laying of a dead hand on a live thing. I say this recognizing that the book has some very suggestive conclusions, and emphasizing at the same time that we do not have to worry about the shallow stupidities with which the reviewers of the leading capitalist papers greeted it. But whatever contributions it makes are impaired by a method which, in the end, so encrusts with extraneous considerations the essential beauty of Shakespeare's dramatic poetry, that the poetry is barely visible.

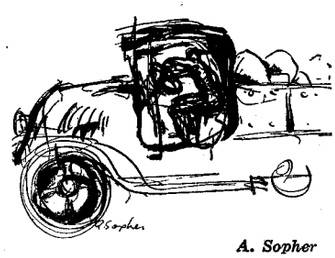
What are Smirnov's main ideas? First, that Shakespeare's work "in spite of its internal unity and the correctness of his ideology, falls into three periods. During the first period, around 1600, there occurred the coalescence of all the foremost forces of the country, the upper middle class, the monarchy, gentry, and even part of the landed nobility. This is reflected in the joyous optimism of Shakespeare's early work, which is filled with a bold and happy affirmation of life and with obviously aristocratic elements." He continues, "But the effects of the disintegration of this class alignment are already apparent in the plays written around 1597 . . . hence the tragic treatment of royal power in *Julius Caesar* (1599) and its confused conclusions, its pessimism, and the gloomy overtones of the earlier *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598). In the second period, continues Smirnov, "the disintegration was completed . . . these were the years marked by the decline of Elizabeth's reign and the advent, under James I, of feudal reaction. The nobility, with the support of the monarchy, was preparing to defend its position against the imminent onslaught of the bourgeoisie and the gentry." At this point, Smirnov explains, Shakespeare "discontinued the gay comedies and the idealized depiction of the past." Instead, "with powerful tragedies as well as sharply dramatic comedies, he entered the arena as champion of the heroic ideals of bourgeois humanism." Unfortunately, "Shakespeare was not destined to retain this position. Reality was against him. The age of humanism was at an end . . . he was forced to choose between degenerate royalists and revolutionary, though sanctimonious, Puritan hagglers." In addition, "the Beaumont and Fletcher type of play became the vogue . . . very strongly aristocratic in flavor. It began to crowd Shakespeare off the stage. Without betraying either his basic principles or his social, ethical, or political convictions, he made certain ideological concessions which affected even his style." His third period (1609-11) began. But "he could not endure such self-imposed violation of his artistic integrity." Five years before his death he stopped writing.

THE READER will begin to see the strength and weaknesses of this method. As a Marxist, Smirnov is attempting to define the historic framework within which Shakespeare worked, the revolutionary transition from medievalism to the modern world. He is therefore making a contribution when he defines Shakespeare's point of view as based on the free will of man, as being individualistic in the tradition of the Renaissance, non-religious, rejecting all metaphysical mysteries. By this method he gives us an antidote to the rapturous agnosticism typifying a good deal of Shakespearean criticism.

But he succumbs to the dangers of this method, that of forcing everything into a preconceived scheme. Not content with isolating the *general* moral values which entered into Shakespeare's art, he goes beyond that and, armed with the thesis that in every case "the social background is the causal explanation of the plot," he proceeds to explain every single development in Shakespeare's plays as the immediate response to historic changes of which Shakespeare is assumed to have understood the significance, every character as the representative of a historic tendency. His zeal increasing with each example, halted only for a moment by his self-administered warning that "we must not overestimate Shakespeare's historical knowledge or his comprehension of historic events," he plunges headlong into grotesque absurdities, landing in a morass of sociological insensitiveness that is death to any aesthetic experience.

To give only a few examples, how does Smirnov know that the great disillusionment and sorrow that Shakespeare expressed through *Hamlet* can be "interpreted in terms of the decay of absolutism around 1600"? How does he know that in the *Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare "criticizes certain failings of the ruling class, hoping thus to strengthen its position"? How does he know that in the Henry plays Shakespeare "is fighting his class enemies"? By what fantastic process does he arrive at the conclusion that in *Othello* Iago "is the embodiment of the cynical philistine merchant of the period of primary accumulation"? How does he know that Goneril and Regan in *King Lear* embody "feudal ideals but with the additional traits of primary accumulation, greed, cruelty, ruthlessness"? How does he know that in *Antony and Cleopatra* Shakespeare keeps Octavius an unattractive character "because by this time the dismal side of absolutism had been disclosed to him, as had also the rising philistine capitalist culture."

Driven by the hallucinations of his scheme, he arrives at the most arbitrary critical judgments. What are we to think of a critic who dismisses *Troilus and Cressida* and *Measure for Measure,* where Shakespeare's imagery achieves a concentration characteristic of his maturest period, as having little significance? One can assume only that these plays are dismissed because they do not fit into his scheme. What are we to say of a critic who thinks that Prospero's insistence on chastity for his daughter until she is married is a sign of Shakespeare's having "surrendered his former position and yielded to the taste of



A. Sopher

* SHAKESPEARE—A MARXIST INTERPRETATION, *by A. A. Smirnov, issued by the Critics' Group. P. O. Box 78, New York. 35c.*

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the reactionary aristocracy"; who thinks that the "passionate and unaffected language" of Romeo after he meets Juliet is due not to the dramatist's art, depicting the deepening of character in the presence of a powerfully felt emotion, but to his "struggle against feudalism"?

This tortuous method grows worse. He finds that Caliban's guttural gibberish is a "truly revolutionary song!" Gravely adjusting his spectacles, Smirnov will grant you that Caliban "is confused"; but "it does not matter, he is possessed of a passion for freedom," hence of all Shakespeare's characters, mind you, "he alone is a true revolutionary." Perhaps Smirnov will then tell us why Shakespeare depicts Caliban as attempting to rape the young Miranda? Is it that Shakespeare was a revolutionary in Act II and a counter-revolutionary in Act III?

His straining efforts to find political symbolism in every nook and cranny of the plays and to fit everything to his scheme blinds him to character. He finds the cold Isabella in *Measure for Measure,* who will not sacrifice her chastity for her brother's life, "the representative of humanist morality." He sees in Cleopatra only debased sensuality shorn of the subtle and profound changes that Shakespeare gives us as the tragedy descends and upon which its effect depends. And he crowns his character judgments with the extraordinary conclusion that Shakespeare's "historic perspective prevented any regret at the passing of the Lears," since the aged and shattered king was a "feudal figure." How is it possible to respond to the titanic emotion of these scenes when the sensibilities have been so deformed by sociological formulas?

SHAKESPEARE, a unified personality whose range of sensibility has never been surpassed, was, I am convinced, profoundly affected by the revolutionary transition in which he lived, and there is unquestionably a way in which his poetic method was affected by the social forces of his time. But it is obvious that it is not the way depicted for us by Smirnov, through direct political responses, but rather through an exceedingly subtle process of assimilation which, so far as I know, no one has yet attempted to examine in a thorough manner. If it is impossible for any artist to escape the impress of his time, it is at the same time an insidious and vitiating fallacy which assumes that the artist at all times responds like a gong to the immediate impact of personal or political events. (See, for example, the bewilderment of the critics who are at a loss to explain Beethoven's later powerful quartets written during a period of intense personal suffering.)

Was it not against such a fallacy that Engels was warning us when he wrote: "In judging the events and series of events of day-to-day history, it will never be possible for anyone to go right back to the economic causes. Even today, when the specialized press gives such rich materials . . . it is still impossible . . . to draw general conclusions, *at any point of time,* from these ever-changing

A. Redfield

Design for sculpture: The cultural superstructure arises on the economic base.

and very complicated factors; of these the most important generally operate in secret before they suddenly and violently make themselves felt on the surface." If this difficulty of fixing cause and effect "at any point of time" existed for Engels in the more tangible field of economic and political history, then how much more wary must we be in fixing an artist's response "at any point of time" when we are considering the tenuous, unconscious, subtle responses of a dramatic poet. And yet Smirnov asserts that Shakespeare foresaw in 1598 the disintegration of a political alliance that would take place in 1601 and *"hence,* the gloomy overtones of *Much Ado About Nothing."*

For Marxism the basic problem of literary analysis is to clarify the way in which social, historic, and political events enter into a work of art, to clarify the *relation* of non-æsthetic to æsthetic values. I emphasize the word "relation" because it is here that the Marxist critic has an incomparable advantage over those critics who do not perceive this connection, completely denying it, in fact (Croce), or those writers who assess this relation falsely and end up by dissolving æsthetic gold in sociological acidities.

If the eminent Dr. Johnson's dictum of the eighteenth century, "His works support no opinion with arguments, nor supply a faction with invective," was superseded by Coleridge's pronouncement that Shakespeare's plays are "philosophical," it is because we recognize that *every* writer is "philosophical" in one way or another, because he cannot escape a point of view. But Shakespeare was also a *dramatic* poet. And this confronts us with the problem as to how far it is possible to derive conclusions about his philosophy from his plots (most of which were traditional or borrowed anyway). How much of the philosophic significance of character is due to the action of a single character and how much to effect of the *whole?*

While a critic like Hegel sees in *Lear* "an extraordinary unity of unrestricted evil," Smirnov preposterously sees the play as "the first humanist English tragedy dedicated to the problem of the necessity for a rigid law of succession." If the first judgment is a purely moral one, the second is so irrelevant as to become a barrier between us and any æsthetic experience of the play. The isolation of the moral values in a work of art is a legitimate enterprise so long as it is never forgotten that moral values and, hence, political implications (from which no work of art can escape), *enter into art in a specific way* and that they constitute one of many other values combined with it. It is fruitful to isolate the social and political components of art only if we do not sever the relation which these values exhibit toward the other values in art, which alone make possible the *aesthetic* experience.

The love of Shakespeare was a veritable cult in Marx's household. Both Marx and Engels were soaked in Shakespeare, and the few direct comments we have on his work from them are exceedingly valuable as suggestions for a study of his art. It is one of Smirnov's failings, which he has in common with other critics, that he makes no distinction between *psychology* and dramatic *character.* A created figure in a play has no psychology; he has a character definitely constructed out of social components, without which the play could not be understood, and with as much depth as the creator is capable of. It is ridiculous to explore and judge the psychology of a character as if he were a *historic* personage with a case history. It is legitimate to analyze the *effect* of character. That is why, I think, Engels wrote to Lassalle: "It seems to me that the person [in a play] is characterized not only by what he does, but also how he does it. . . . According to my view of the drama the realistic should not be overlooked because of the intellectual elements, Shakespeare for Schiller. . . ." Marx developed this even more trenchantly when he wrote on the same point: "You must Shakespearize more. . . . I consider Schillerism, *making individuals the mere mouthpieces of the spirit of the times,* your main fault." (My emphasis—M. H.) Have we not in these passages a criticism of that method which vitiates most of romantic criticism and the present pamphlet as well? Is there not a rebuke here for the critical method which ignores the inner logic of an æsthetic object and instead of seeking the links between this object as art and its historic origins, makes the dramatic character a mere blatant "mouthpiece of the spirit of the times"? Shakespeare, a unified personality whose range of intellect and sensibility have

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never been surpassed, as I have said, was, I am convinced, profoundly affected by the revolutionary period in which he lived. The problem is to clarify, if we can, the way his dramatic structure, his psychological insight, and his poetic method embodied the elements which shattered the "mind-forged manacles" of ecclesiasticism and hierarchy in what Engels called the "greatest revolution in human history"—the liberation from a thousand years of medievalism.

Smirnov praises Shakespeare for "striving to change the world," for possessing what Tolstoy bitterly denounced him for lacking. They could both arrive at opposite and equally wrong conclusions, because they employ fundamentally, at least on this point, the same approach to Shakespeare's art—they both seek in it explicit moral and political statements, whereas Shakespeare's vision of the world is imbedded in the dense tissues of his art. Rather than an attitude that "seeks to change the world," which would make Shakespeare a conscious revolutionary, an anachronistic miracle, I believe that his incomparable sense of moral and intellectual emancipation is due to the fact that Shakespeare's maturity coincided with a moment in English history when the nationalist-absolutist revolution against feudalism surged to a height of triumph which cleared the air of all taint of medieval hatred of life, and which held for about two decades permitting the most daring exploration of the soul, before the counter-revolution set in. This gives acumen to T. S. Eliot's remark that "the Elizabethan and Jacobin dramatists believed in their own age in a way in which no nineteenth- or twentieth-century writer of the greatest seriousness has been able to believe in his own age." Eliot's method, capable of marvelous individual insights, is not equal to a systematic comprehension of the period as a whole; but it is in the sense of this remark that I think we can extend Hazlitt's phrase, "If he was the least moral of poets he was the greatest of moralists," to say that if he was the least partisan, he was the most political of poets. But it is only in the sense already given that we can say this.

The fundamental failing of Smirnov's method, in my opinion, is that he seeks to evaluate Shakespeare's art simply as ideology, that he confuses ideology with insight. Marx had a tremendous admiration for Balzac's *insight* into the social basis of character; he had no use for his ideology, which was royalist and reactionary. In Smirnov's hands the historic frame in which Shakespeare worked becomes a Procrustes bed on which his art is racked to make way for a scheme arbitrarily imposed. Dramatic characters are the result neither of the immaculate conception of romantic critics nor are they historic personages. They are at once *real* and *created,* with historic origins but also having the quality of *genuinely new creations* forged in the creative furnace of the poetic imagination. Bourgeois idealist criticism ignores the first, purely sociological criticism forgets the second. It is high time for us to assert that we will bring our criticism to maturity when we demonstrate that Marxism alone permits us to understand, within the limits imposed by history, the full significance and glory of literature as a creative art. MILTON HOWARD.

Laski and Liberalism

THE RISE OF LIBERALISM, *by Harold J. Laski. Harper & Bros., $3.*

LIBERALISM today is very like one of those Ovidian nymphs who, if rudely pursued, turned into something else—a tree, a clump of reeds, a river. You can chase modern liberalism with a definition and, in its effort to escape you, it will turn into almost anything—into Governor Landon or even, if very hard pressed, into Adolf Hitler. It is impossible to pin it down. Perhaps, more lethally inclined, you go after it with a heavy accusation—you say that it is responsible for the disasters of economic imperialism; in such a predicament its metamorphoses are even more ingenious and rapid—it becomes sanitation, toleration, free trade, Mr. Gladstone, science, progress, a world market, an awakening East. It disclaims responsibility, it turns into what it once was—not a nymph, but a hero.

That the past of liberalism is a heroic one could not be more clearly shown than in this brilliant and scholarly book. Without liberalism and all that it implies, we should still be living in a Ptolemaic universe, peopled with medieval angels; our earth would be flattish, there would be fewer of us, and we would make no move without first considering its effect upon our chances of eternal bliss. Would we be happier? Probably. But we would never have experienced the desire for freedom, that desire—the words are not mine but Geoffrey Scott's—to lay open the round horizon of possible achievement. The desire for freedom, it is true, is far from pure; it is connected with such illiberal names as Henry VIII, Machiavelli, Calvin, Luther. It is as much involved in the Medici as it is in Newton's gravity and the whirlwinds of Descartes. But it is permanent and heroic, while liberalism, which once embodied it, is not only impermanent, but has dropped its hero's role for that of tyrant. And one need not beg its pardon for having called it a nymph in the first paragraph; such is its present condition that almost any name will serve.

Mr. Laski is as generous to its past as even the Manchester *Guardian* could be—with this difference, that he detects in its origins the seeds of its destruction. It begins with "the pursuit of gain merely, taken as an end in itself," it is historically connected with the ownership of property. From the time that feudalism breaks down before the capitalist instinct, it is clear that liberalism—with its imperfect conception of social relations—must end by failing to answer a question put to it by those without property, and failing because if it answered it would transcend its own limits, cease to exist. . . .

Liberalism as a capitalist philosophy and liberalism as a means of defense are two very different things: the latter is what we have today, the former has so far receded into history that it can now be given a shape. It can almost be called a coherent body of doctrine. It can certainly be called the philosophy of enlightened selfishness. The various and conflicting ways in which it came to cohere; the mysterious unions of vision and greed, of reason and interest, which gave it birth; the clash of extremes, the lofty patriotism, the daring, and the agony which assisted it to maturity—these the reader must discover for himself in Mr. Laski's pages. His book is such a masterpiece of condensed and subtle exposition that to press its substance into a few paragraphs would be a hopeless task.

But from the attack upon tradition and authority which it records, one might, perhaps, choose a few champions at random, and see what they have to say. In the seventeenth century the state, already secularized by Renaissance and Reformation, has become mercantilist; government controls economic life, interventionism is established, and it is princely interventionism at that. Enter Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell's political revolution, which turned control over from the prince to the legislature, was vast and valuable. But when men whose names have long been forgotten—a Lilburne, a Winstanley—suggested that social revolution was now in order, the answer they received was a curious one. Cromwell had decapitated Charles I and was to devastate Ireland in the name of property; the man of wealth must now inherit the earth. What about the landless, the poor? Oh, the poor are not in favor with God—had they been, they would not have been poor. Puritanism was not liberal in doctrine, but persecution and insecurity had brought it round to this way of thinking. It had forgotten the green bay tree, forgotten the rich man and the eye of the needle, forgotten the beatitudes; its saints were men of substance, its rulers were to be the Whigs.

Between Cromwell and Voltaire there lies an abyss of time, nationality, and character. But it is not a bottomless abyss, it can be traversed. Voltaire was not an irreligious man, far from it: he always declared that metaphysics were divine; and he believed in God, so long as God's function was confined to that of a social brake. "Je veux que mon procureur, mon tailleur, ma femme même croient en Dieu, et je m'imagine que j'en serai moins volé et moins cocu." The answer is Cromwell's, only with an eighteenth-century fleer. As for Voltaire's civil liberty, which he so passionately and sincerely desired, it was "a liberty compatible with the fullest opportunities for men of property." It was an unhappy world—he shook his head over it—it was divided beyond change into rich and poor; but he did not see how it could ever be otherwise. The French Revolution is deeply in his debt, and why not? The French Revolution established at once the rights of property and the existence of a proletariat.

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Cromwell, Voltaire, Edmund Burke; the choice is a random one, but it does emphasize the conflicting elements in liberalism. Burke was a great man and a generous man; he fought American taxation and tyranny in India. He was also a utilitarian conservative—he wore his liberalism with a difference. Monopoly of capital eventually benefited the poor; as for interventionism: "We ought manfully to resist the very first idea . . . that it is within the competence of government . . . to supply to the poor those necessaries which it has pleased the Divine Providence for a while to withhold from them." This is a long way from the conservative paternalism of Peel and Disraeli; but it is near, uncomfortably near, to the enlightened *laissez-faire* of Cobden and Bright.

From the Middle Ages to the 1880's, from the church to the individual, from God's poor to the government's poor—the way had been long, the fight bitter, the triumph complete. Nineteenth-century liberalism could point with justifiable pride to the men it produced and the benefits it bestowed. How could it foresee that the forces of production would come into conflict with the relations of production? What could it offer Burke's "swinish multitude" (now armed with a philosophy of its own) but social service and reform? It had abolished so many outworn things: feudalism, ecclesiasticism, intolerance; in despair, it had even begun to abolish *laissez-faire;* but it could not abolish itself. That is left to other hands.

GEORGE DANGERFIELD.

Prize Novel

STEPS GOING DOWN, *by John T. McIntyre. Farrar & Rinehart.* $2.50.

"THE All Nations Prize Novel Competition" has a rather awe-inspiring sound. But don't get frightened, folks, keep your blood pressure down. *Steps Going Down,* the winner of it, is a lulu. And how.

With the publication of *Steps Going Down,* this reviewer hereby launches a movement to abolish all prize-novel contests throughout the country. A résumé of prize-novel contests in America reveals the reason. Almost without exception the winning novels of prize contests have been badly written (*Steps Going Down* is fairly well written), mediocre, sincere, and terrible flops. If we scan the more prominent names of American fiction we find that not one single first-rate author in the country has ever won a contest. Dreiser, Anderson, Dos Passos, Faulkner, Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, Wolfe—none of them ever bagged the cash. It is true Lewis won the Pulitzer prize for *Arrowsmith,* but the Pulitzer prize, for work already published, has nothing to do with elimination contests, etc.

Now let's get down to a few facts behind the scenes. When the average young author gets his first novel accepted, his publisher usually makes him sign a contract calling for his next two books. For three books, then, the

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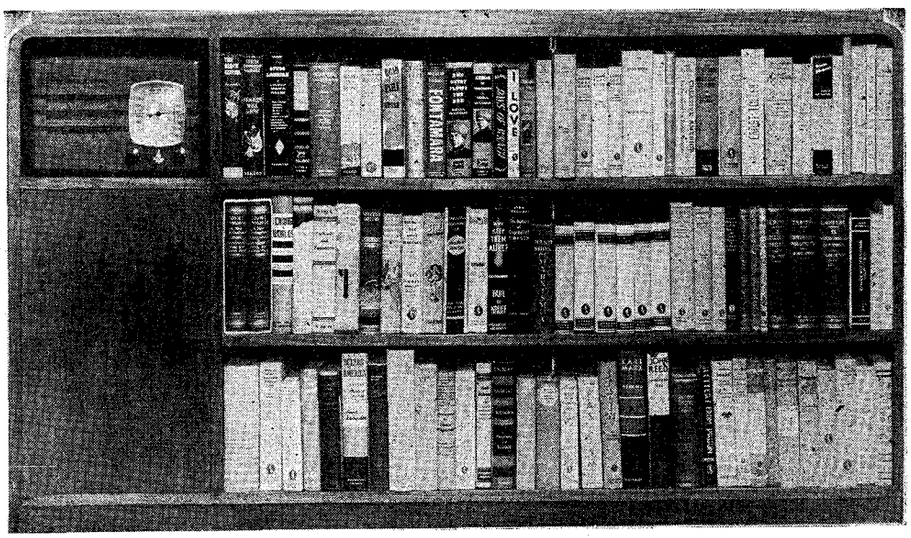

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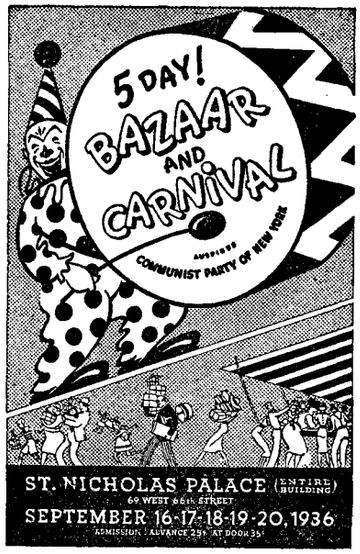
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author is tied down. Prize contests may come and go during that period (the three-book period), but he has to pass them by, even though he feels the book he is working on might be in the running. By the time he starts work on a fourth novel, the chances are he is already a hardened workman, concentrating on his labor and having little faith in a 500-to-1 chance of winning a prize contest. Besides, to change publishers when a publisher already has brought out three novels, just to take a long shot at a prize, is not always good policy. The rules for most contests stipulate that even if entries do not win the prize, all novels submitted are submitted for general publication as well as for the contest. And history has bitterly demonstrated that novels, submitted and accepted, which have not copped the prize, are brought out with almost no fanfare or advertising at all—the publisher concentrating on his prize-winner. So there you have it, the non-prize-winner is in the soup.

However, Mr. McIntyre, the winner of the "All Nations Prize Novel Contest," is in the gravy. Besides his American publishers, Warner Brothers and the publishing houses of eleven foreign countries will beat the drum for him.

Steps Going Down is a tale of small-time crooks, waitresses, second-rate beer halls, rooming houses, and drinking parties. Though the setting is an American city of the current year, the book constantly reminds one of the 1890's or the early 1900's. The chapters are spiced with flashback reminiscences which are sentimentalized in the "hearty" manner, and the work seems to be written either by a man of O. O. McIntyre's age and outlook, or by a young writer who faithfully reads O. O. McIntyre's column. The story goes round and round and doesn't come out anywhere. A guy named Pete (a sort of James Cagney-George Raft type) gets a job in a bank through a friend Slavin, quits his job, and for the rest of the book the reader cracks his brains trying to find out (1) why Slavin got Pete the job, (2) who Slavin really is, (3) who Pete really is, (4) what crime Slavin has (or has not) committed, (5) how Thelma, Pete's current girl friend, always knows where to reach Pete by phone even though Pete may be in hiding or in any of the city's thousand drug stores, beer joints, or merely passing a public telephone booth. In short, a lot of mysterious things happen in 504 pages, and the book is so neatly stitched together that you keep on hoping until the end for the great light to burst.

The book opens well and is intensely interesting for thirty pages. The opening is handled in a solid realistic fashion which reminds one at times of W. R. Burnett or Benjamin Appel. Interest is aroused, the first characters of the book are fleshed before us. Then the tale starts going round and round. Pete packs his grip and hides out. He comes back. He hides out again. About thirty or forty characters are involved in this hiding-out, hiding-in process. They get nowhere. The novel, in the final analysis, is not even a good picture of petty-gangster or mugg life. Neither is it a fast-moving crime story comparable to the films put out by Warner Brothers, who are interested in this book. There is a lot of "frank" talk but, strange to say, not a single juicy love scene in the whole novel. Pete is frequently in Thelma's or Sadie's bedroom, but all he does is smile and back out. The dialogue is handled well, reminding one of movie dialogue, full of wise-cracks and slang. Some of the characters have picturesque names: Dripps, Bids, Ivory, Cork, Gill, Zinn, Zoie, and Mrs. Salz.

In the opinion of this reviewer the publishers have picked a dud. *Steps Going Down* is not even first-class tripe like *Anthony Adverse, Gone with the Wind,* or the Kathleen Norris sagas, and it is doubtful if it will rocket in the best-seller lists. It is a combination of O. O. McIntyre and the moving pictures *San Francisco* and *The Bowery,* but it doesn't build up to any climaxes because the characters are either hiding out or too busy running around.

ALBERT HALPER.

★

Recently Recommended

The People, Yes by Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. Poetry.
Travels in Two Democracies by Edmund Wilson. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. On the U. S. S. R. and U. S.
The Flowering of New England by Van Wyck Brooks. Dutton. $4. Criticism.
Noah Pandre by Salman Schnéour. Lee Furman. $2. Fiction.
History of a Sewing-Machine Operator by Nathan Resnikoff and Charles Resnikoff. Charles Resnikoff. $1.25. Fiction.
T. H. Huxley's Diary of the Voyage of H.M.S. Rattlesnake. Edited by Julian Huxley. Doubleday Doran. $3. Science.
This Final Crisis by Allen Hutt. International. $2. Economics.
Easter Week by Brian O'Neill. International. 60c. Irish history.
The Olive Field by Ralph Bates. Dutton. $2.50. Fiction.
Eyes on Japan by Victor A. Yakhontoff. Coward McCann. $3.50. International relations.
Head O' W-Hollow by Jesse Stuart. Dutton. $2.50. Fiction.
The Big Money by John Dos Passos. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. Fiction.
Skutarevsky by Leonid Leonov. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. Fiction.
Essays Ancient and Modern by T. S. Eliot. Harcourt, Brace. $2. Criticism.

Out This Week

(A listing of important new books, not necessarily recommended.)

Now That April's Here by Morley Callaghan. Random House. $2. Short stories.
Time to Kill by Reardon Conner. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50. Fiction.
Catalogue by George Milburn. Harcourt, Brace. $2. Fiction.
A Time to Remember by Leane Zugsmith. Random House. $2. Fiction.
Masters of Russian Music by M. D. Calvocoressi and Gerald Abraham. Knopf. $3.75. Critical biography.
Rich Land, Poor Land by Stuart Chase. Whittlesey House. $2.50. Economics.
A Guide to Philosophy by C. E. M. Joad. Random House $2.50. Philosophy.
Fires Underground by Heinz Liepmann. Lippincott. $2. German revolutionary activity.
Theater of the Moment by George Jean Nathan. Knopf. $2.50. Criticism.
Gomez, Tyrant of the Andes by Thomas Rourke. Morrow. $3.50. Biography.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

"The Last of the Mohicans," Some New Recordings, Lying About the Federal Theater

THE *Last of the Mohicans* is one of the noblest pictures to come out of Hollywood, and if you want your children to grow up noble, by all means take them to see the film. Should your own nobler impulses be in need of furbishing, these few reels will do the job cleanly. This is not a stupendous picture and it is colossal only in spots, but in the matters of nobility and self-sacrifice it is as good as if Herbert Marshall were in it or Leslie Howard. I haven't any friends or acquaintances in the movie industry but I'm certain that Hollywood people are the finest and noblest in the world. This judgment is based simply and squarely on the traditional moral grandeur of their productions, *The Last of the Mohicans* being a case in point.

Here is over an hour's length of film without a single sequence that might be said to violate the exactions of moral grandeur. Nobility and grandeur are sustained with an ingenuity that ranges from the struggle on a cliff's edge to the shooting match between Hawkeye and Major Howard; the winner of this match is to face the prospect of being burned at the stake in exchange for the freedom of beautiful, brave, bellicose Binnie Barnes. Whether this winner (Randolph Scott) is finally burned or rescued by brave and noble American colonists will be left to the reader's imagination. Certainly it is furthest from these lines' function to vitiate anyone's joys. It can be disclosed, however, that there is a splendid sequence preparatory to the burning. Some bloodthirsty Huron hags drool wonderfully into the camera and they sharpen staves and jab them into Randolph Scott's midsection and all that time the tom-toms are beating and Magua (Bruce Cabot) yells war-yells.

That was a pretty colossal scene. Fairly bloody, too. In fact, there is a liberal quota of blood throughout the picture, dripping scalps, stranglings and such. Robert Barrat in the role of Chingachgook, the last Mohican, does about the best and noblest strangling in recent months, and Hawkeye the best shooting. Binnie Barnes, too, shoots an Indian in the belly, but that is done at close range. Mostly, the white women confine themselves to loading the muskets. They do that in canoes while being chased and in Fort William Henry, which is besieged by Indians and Frenchmen.

The redcoats are commanded by Colonel Munro, who is noble because he gives his life for the British Empire. The Marquis de Montcalm heads the French forces and he is noble by birth and because he hates unnecessary bloodshed. This nobility of the two commanders is a fortunate coincidence because the picture is expected to sell in both England and France. Please do not understand this as an insinuation, because the Indians are noble, too, and there is no Indian market worth speaking of or catering to. Even the wily Magua has lineaments of nobility, because he does give Chingachgook a noble battle and he does refrain from killing the defenseless Major Heyward when the latter stalks into the village dangling his wampum before the council fire.

Bruce Cabot's playing of Magua was about the only stupendous performance of the evening. The rest of the casting could have been improved in a dozen ways. Heather Angel's plunge off the cliff was stilted and spiritless. Her role called for a Jean Harlow who has plenty of spirit and does not need a blonde wig. Phillip Reed, too, was a tame Uncas uselessly struggling against the limitations of a Harvard accent. That Uncas part had been so patently and inevitably destined for Hugh Herbert that one can only marvel at this blind spot of the casting office. I debate in my mind the possibility of doing a new and mammoth *Last of the Mohicans* with a new and mammoth cast, including these suggestions as well as W. C. Fields for Chingachgook, Warren Hymer for Major Heyward, and Allen Jenkins for Hawkeye. With slight alterations in the script, the Marx brothers could be called in for comedy relief.

EDWARD NEWHOUSE.

Music

A NUMBER of recent recordings of classical music are deserving of comment.

Mozart: In playing the Concerto in G Major for violin and orchestra (Columbia), Huberman, assisted by the Vienna Philharmonic under Issay Dobrowen, gives a performance that is infinitely better than his recording standard of the past year. His playing is nearer the intellect than the heart, but despite a noble conception there are many lapses in taste and intonation.

Schubert: The "Trout" Quintet has been issued in a Victor Masterpiece Album. Schnabel and members of the excellent Pro Arte String Quartet, assisted by Alfred Hobday, string bass, do justice to this opus, one of the more exquisite of Schubert's chamber works. The balance is commendable, and Schnabel's playing is notable for its superb ensemble sense.

Beethoven: In the Sonata in C Minor, Opus 3 (Columbia), Egon Petri's American recording debut is in every way a success. The piano recording is up to the present high standard in the English studios and the playing has all the virility and passion that are required in the greatest of Beethoven's piano sonatas.

Brahms: In rendering the sextet for strings (Victor Masterpiece Album), the Pro Arte Quartet, augmented by Anthony Pini, second cello, and Hobday, again distinguish themselves in a profoundly moving performance of a rarely heard work.

Bach: The Twelve Small Preludes, arranged for harpsichord (Columbia 170634), are played by Yella Pessl, one of the great harpsichordists of the day. Her fine rhythmic sense and forthright tone make her a notable Bach interpreter.

Scheel

"Yes, Baron Munchausen, you're just the man to write a movie about Russia—and remember, starring Marion Davies!"

THERE are several new popular recordings worthy of your attention.

Billie Holiday and Her Orchestra. One of the most original and sincere of the Negro blues singers, Billie Holiday has finally made a record that has no equals in recent months, the coupling of "Summertime," from *Porgy and Bess,* and her own "Billie's Blues" (Vocalion 3288). The supporting band is good, if not ideal.

Teddy Wilson and His Orchestra. The most distinctive of the young swing pianists has recently made some excellent numbers, among them, "You Turned the Tables on Me," "Here's Love in Your Eyes," "You Came to My Rescue," and "Sing Baby Sing," with a combination of musicians who happened to be playing in California this summer. In each case it is the performance and not the composition that is distinguished (Brunswick).

Fletcher Henderson and His Orchestra. Henderson's records still fail to capture the insidious propelling quality his orchestra imparts in real life. His very recent records of "Shoe-Shine Boy," "Jimtown Blues," and "Knock, Knock," are inferior to those he made while the excellent drummer Sidney Catlett was still with the band: "Stealin'

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Apples," "Grand Terrace Rhythm," "Blue Lou." The first named are Victors, the latter Vocalions.

Fred Astaire with *Johnny Green's Orchestra.* Unfortunately for Brunswick, the score of the new Astaire picture, *Swing Time,* is nowhere near Jerome Kern's standard. Astaire's dancing is preferable to his singing, which has its points, in the numbers "Pick Yourself Up," "Bojangles of Harlem," "Never Gonna Dance," and "The Way You Look Tonight." Green's band, needless to say, fails to swing, although they play competently enough.

HENRY JOHNSON.

The Theater

IF any sensible person were asked the simple question, "What is wrong with the American theater?" he would undoubtedly answer that it does not reach the American people on any considerable scale, that it is a mere drop in the bucket of the entertainment thirst of the 125,000,000 inhabitants of these shores. And if he had thought very much about it, he might add that this was owing to its whole economic setup which, while requiring admission prices too high to admit of a mass audience, nevertheless fails to provide any but a few outstanding playwrights and actors with anything resembling a living wage or a modicum of security.

How heartily, then, this sensible person, correctly informed, would approve the Federal Theater Project, with its coast-to-coast network of little theaters bringing to millions, who never saw a play before, its bounty of drama, classical and modern, serious and comic, at either nominal admission fees or none at all. And how much more would our sensible friend approve when informed that those working in the production of these plays found thereby a refuge from the hardship and want characteristic of permanent mass unemployment!

Precisely for the reason, however, that this sensible person would so heartily approve the bare facts, the mouthpiece of reactionary big business, the *Saturday Evening Post,* hastens to broadcast lies about the Federal W.P.A. Theater Project. Two articles on this project were published by the magazine, the first in June, and the second in August. A comparison of the two indicates why there had to be two. The first, by Mr. Garet Garrett, was entitled "Federal Theater for the Masses," and while not free from such distortions of both the project and the American scene as typified in this statement, "The cry of hunger has not been heard in America—not yet," nevertheless he gave a fairish summary of a number of the local projects and their work, occasionally handing out such praise as this in connection with the New York Theater Project's *Triple A Plowed Under:*

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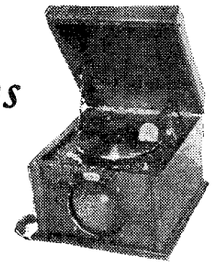

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headlines. and by a trick of offstage voices breaking in with ominous repetitions of a single phrase or a few words of explanatory text, the amount of suggestion sometimes evoked by a scene lasting two or three minutes was extraordinary.

Obviously, in spite of the fact that Mr. Garrett freely raised the Red scare in connection with the project, especially the New York project, something had to be done to show that there was (1) nothing at all praiseworthy about the whole thing, and (2) it was an extreme menace to American life. And so in August came Mr. Harrison Grey Fiske's article entitled, "The Federal Theater Doom-Boggle." This was a more workmanlike job. It said those on the project payrolls were not only relief chiselers, but incompetents and Communists to boot. It said all the plays were worthless, and it suppressed even mention of many of the activities of the project. It indulged in such flat-footed lying as to say of *Triple A Plowed Under* that "the outstanding character is Earl Browder, Secretary of the Communist Party," whereas anyone who has seen the play knows that the Browder character appears but once to speak one line that certainly does not take as much as one minute to deliver. The article lists a handful of the New York project productions which it says were the record "to date" of the New York project's work.

A FEW FACTS will illuminate the outrageousness of this summary. The project was authorized in October 1935, and since that time in New York City alone has produced eighty plays, to audiences totaling upwards of four million persons. One unit which Mr. Fiske failed to mention in discussing the New York project, was the Portable Theater, which regularly reaches a weekly audience of 100,000 persons, most of whom, questionnaire returns show, are seeing their first stage show. Nor was the Children's Theater mentioned. Another activity Mr. Fiske failed to include is the Circus, which has played to 900,000 persons. Still another unmentioned is the Marionette Unit, which has played to 500,000 persons. And mind you, this is in New York alone. And as to cost, the New York project with its payroll of 5400 needy writers, actors, and technicians, cost $3,525,506 to operate during its first eight months, or an average of between $100 and $110 per month per person on the payroll—and *this sum takes in all costs including payroll, administration, rentals, and equipment.* The bulk of the performances have been free to the public, while the project's Broadway shows charge a nominal fee, usually around 15 to 20 percent of regular theater admission prices.

The Federal Theater to date has had a magnificent record of achievement. The one doubtful part has been the payment of a wage less than adequate for a minimum decent standard of living, and the continuing insecurity which has resulted from uncertainty as to how long the project will live. These evils must be eliminated. The corollary proposition is that a permanent federal

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theater must be established in America. These millions of Americans who for the first time have been bewitched by the magic of stagecraft, can be depended upon to back such a movement. So can the personnel of the theater project. But before this can happen, both the personnel of the project and its cheering audiences must be brought to understand that the way lies in the establishment of a People's Government in this country—through an American Farmer-Labor Party.

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The Radio

FORTHCOMING BROADCASTS

President Roosevelt. An address to the third World Power Conference. Columbia network 4:30 p. m., Friday, Sept. 11.

James W. Ford, Communist vice-presidential candidate, 10:45 p. m., Monday, Sept. 21, National Broadcasting System Red network (WEAF, N.Y.).

Earl Browder, Communist presidential candidate, 10:45 p. m., Friday, Oct. 2, National Broadcasting System Blue network (WJZ, N. Y.).

The Screen

WORTH SEEING

The General Died at Dawn. Clifford Odets's first screen play, with Gary Cooper and Madeleine Carroll.

Der Kampf. A new Amkino offering at the Cameo, N. Y., picturing Dimitrov's trial by the Nazis. To be reviewed.

Swing Time. Dancing by Astaire and Rogers and comedy by Helen Broderick and Victor Moore save the day.

Romeo and Juliet. Enough Shakespeare to make worth while an otherwise stagy effort.

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Girls' Dormitory. Introducing a new star, Simone Simon, in a somewhat feeble echo of *Maedchen in Uniform.*

The Theater

OPENING SCHEDULED

Reflected Glory (Morosco, N. Y.). A play by George Kelly, author of *Craig's Wife* and *The Show-Off,* with Tallulah Bankhead, planned to open Sept. 21.

THUMBS UP

Boy Meets Girl (Cort, N. Y.). Sam and Bella Spewack's pretty funny comedy of Hollywood.

Dead End (Belasco, N. Y.). Sometimes effective realism by Sidney Kingsley, set in New York's slums.

The Emperor's New Clothes (Adelphi, N. Y.). W.P.A. players in the delicious old folk tale.

Idiot's Delight (Shubert, N. Y.). Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne romping through Robert Sherwood's anti-war comedy.

Injunction Granted! (Biltmore, N. Y.). The Living Newspaper W.P.A. project in an episodic history of American labor struggles.

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Tobacco Road (Forrest, N. Y.). Jack Kirkland's dramatization of Erskine Caldwell's story of the poor whites.

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